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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Sunday
BALANCED NEWS, PEARLS OF VIEWS

Bishops at a loss, miss voice of Cardinal Sin

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FVR factor makes GMA hangs tough

Ramos backing cited for Arroyo's survival despite break with Cory

By Michael Lim Ubac

WHY did former President Fidel Ramos appear on the 11th hour to rescue the Arroyo presidency from a potentially tragic end?

FVR to the rescue! The former President, a high-profile cheerleader for President Arroyo as the most harrowing day of her presidency, is right up there again with her at the swearing of the officers and members of the Lakas-CMD on Subic day at the Palace reportedly to find track consolidation amendments.

Drilon behind Cabinet 'coup,' says Palace

By D.C. Catapangan Jr., Christine Avendaño and Cynthia Balana

Joker said to be mentoring Noli for presidency

By John Laderas Javellana

GMA wanted e-VAT delayed, 'defectors' claim

By Michelle V. Ramos

OBJECTS OF AFFECTION/SUSPICION, depending on one's political persuasion, the "Hyatt 10" are doing the rounds of public forums to explain why they did what they had to do. Spotted at the Women de Manila 411 on (DSWD) Secretary Dinky Soliman and ex-Deputy Secretary Pierre to Abad.

GRIM FACES. Cabinet secretaries answer the media's questions in the wake-about the resignation of 10 key officials of the Arroyo administration last Friday. From left, head of the Presidential Management Staff, Secretary Norberto Tigas, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Presidential Legal Counsel Gabby Claudio and Environment Secretary Mike Defensor.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SUNDAY, JULY 10, 2005

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Cebu to back GMA 'all the way'

By Jaime R. Bulanhoy
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Cebu leaders are prepared to protect President Macapagal-Arroyo and to give her sanctuary should she decide to govern from here, away from the growing political tension in Metro Manila.

Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña, who is on a study tour in Netherlands, told reporters in a teleconference Friday that Cebuanos would support President Arroyo "all the way" amid calls for her to resign.

Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia, who was also in the same Netherlands trip, also called on Cebuanos to rally behind the President.

The local police immediately secured the Malacañang in Cebu on Friday night after learning that the President was reportedly planning to come to Cebu.

"Cebuanos would welcome her. She is very welcome to govern from here. She has been doing that every time she is here at least once a month," stressed Cebu City Councilor Jose Jakosalem, a close ally of the President.

However, Jakosalem said it would be unlikely for the President to leave Malacañang amid the political crisis.

"Reports that she would be coming to Cebu are just blatantly propaganda... instigasi. It is unlikely for her to come with the political crisis now [because] it won't have a favorable impression. If everything is stabilized, she can go around," Jakosalem said.

Eddiberto Empleum, an administration ally and undersecretary of the Department of Land Transportation and Communication, said there was no need for the President "to come to Cebu to ensure her reported because the so-called People Power [in Manila City] has failed. There's no reason for her to seek refuge in Cebu now that the situation is normal," he said.

"If she (Arroyo) comes to Cebu, it is not surprising. Cebu provides her with a psychological atmosphere where she can think and be energized because Cebuanos support her," he added.

Empleum said the President was embroiled in trial. Cebu on July 12 but did not know if that would still push through in view of developments in Manila.

Virgie Rich-Gonzales, the city's police director, said the Philippine National Police had been on double alert since Friday.

Gazpacho personality went to Malacañang on Sunday the other night to oversee security preparations. At least 20 vessels of tanked with barricades had been set up in front of the building since Friday night.

"We are just securing the place. The PNP's on high alert, even on double alert with the present political crisis. As to whether the President is coming in Cebu or not, we have no confirmation," Empleum said.

Several militant and party-list groups have had announced they would intensify their silent protests to call on the President to resign.

Members of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines had already joined Royal Means and its allied organizations in the Gloria Stop Down Movement.

Party-list group Bayan Muna Representative Satur Ocampo said he was in favor of holding snap elections to clean the air and let somebody their senior powers.

Cebu's business community, however, would remain united in their support to President Arroyo, said Robert Go, president of the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI). With a report from Jhannon Magallanes, PDI Visayas Bureau

Minority expected to be new majority in Senate

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

A SENATE realignment is in the offing following the decision of Senate President Franklin Drilon, Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon and other members of the Liberal Party to withdraw support for President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We expect the minority to become the new majority," opposition Sen. Rodolfo Lacson quipped. Since three LP senators were no longer with the administration wing, the minority would have the numbers to take the Senate leadership, he said.

The LP of which Drilon is president, announced on Friday that it was withdrawing support for the President and had asked her to resign to calm the crisis engulfing the nation. The LP is the second-largest party in the administration coalition, next to the ruling Lakas-CMD.

Drilon also took exception to reports that he had been angling for the vice presidency.

He denied reports that he went to Hong Kong to greet Vice President Noli de Castro to discuss his and vice president in the event Mrs. Arroyo resigns and he (Castro is elevated to the presidency.

"I never went to Hong Kong to meet De Castro. That is totally wrong," Drilon told the reporters.

The Senate wrangle is expected when the second regular session opens on July 25, chair is, if Mrs. Arroyo continues to hang on to the presidency, despite mounting calls for her resignation.

When asked if he expects to be ousted by fellow administration senators, Drilon said, "I do not really know. I do not discount that."

This was the second time Drilon risked his position as Senate President, choosing to stand up for his political principle.

In November 2000, shortly before President Joseph Estrada was impeached, Drilon bolted the ruling Lapian ng Masang Pilipino after Estrada was accused of taking almost half a billion pesos in "jueteng" payoffs and kickbacks from the collusive racket.

Two days later, Drilon was named as Senate president, replacing Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. who presided the Senate impeachment with Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

Drilon said his party had four members in the Senate — himself, Biazon, Pangilinan and Sen. Mel Roxas who is still elected.

GMA quit call leaves LP in disarray

By Juliet Labog-Javellana, Tina G. Santos and TJ Burgonio

THE LIBERAL Party was thrown into disarray yesterday after party stalwarts suddenly withdrew support for embattled President Macapagal-Arroyo and called for her resignation to end the political crisis spawned by allegations she cheated her way to the presidency and that members of her family took gambling payoffs.

The party's decision was announced by Senate President Franklin Drilon, who is also LP president.

But the party's move was threatened by LP chair Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, a staunch supporter of Ms Arroyo, who claimed LP's withdrawal of support was not the official stand of the party.

"It does not reflect the genuine sentiments of the party. It's not a valid statement. It was just a small group and the LP has thousands of members. I think they did not consult," said Atienza.

On Friday, the national executive committee of the LP, a member of the ruling coalition that supported Ms Arroyo in the 2004 elections, voted to withdraw support for the President and demand that she step down.

At least 20 LP leaders favor the resignation of Ms Arroyo, 11 favor her impeachment, one for leave of absence and one for her to stay in office.

Drilon said Atienza did not attend the Friday meeting and the previous consultation meetings were ill-be personally informed him about them.

Aside from Drilon, other LP leaders who sought his Arroyo's resignation were Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, Senators Manuel Roxas II and Rodolfo Biazon.

Those who disagreed with the Final LP stand were Representative Secretary Eric Singson, Reps. Rolando Andaya Jr. and Ricky Sandoval.

Drilon said that contrary to Atienza's claim, the decision was reached after thorough consultations and in a transparent manner. He said that prior to the Club Filipino meeting, LP officials met in a private room held to get the sentiments of LP members.

He said while Atienza did not attend, his sentiment and his son in law Miles Roces were present during the voting.

Pangilinan, Biazon said that he and other LP leaders, including Atienza, remember that the party decision, during the voting was unbroken.

Asked about LP's line after its members took a different stand on the issue, Atienza said, "Definitely we are sticking on the issue but we will settle this internally."

Other LP leaders who joined Atienza yesterday were Administrator Jose Bataclan of Iloilo, LP NEC members Ely Quines, Manila Reps. Mike Rocco and Bambi Nieto, Committee for Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr., Quezon City Rep. Mel Defensor and Bataan governor Enrique Garcia.

But Pangilinan rejected Atienza' claims that the party's decision was "unfounded."

"The decision reached (on yesterday (Friday) was made by a majority of the members of the national board as allowed by the LP constitution," he said, stressing that this represents the party's official stand.

Carlos Cayetano Ayong Maliksi, who attended the party meeting, maintained that LP's decision was arrived at orderly and democratically.

"The meeting went on orderly. The decision was not railroaded. It was logical and fairly supported by LP members who are pro-Arroyo and those who are not," Maliksi said.

Drilon yesterday defended the party's decision and reiterated its appeal to the President to voluntarily resign and allow the constitutional process of succession to proceed.

"Calling for the resignation of the President's resignation is a legitimate constitutional option," Drilon said.

He also appealed to Atienza to let the party leadership thrash out the "differences of opinions" among LP leaders.

"We have to settle our differences and preserve this one solidarity because the differences of opinions among LP leaders," he said.

Antipas Gov. Sabastian Zaldivar-Dino, LP vice president for the Visayas, also disowned the LP's statement calling for Ms Arroyo to resign.

"As LP vice president for the Visayas, (we) do not the general sentiment of the members of the party. It is the stand of a handful of LP leaders," Dino told the reporter.

LP's decision also drew criticisms from Ms Arroyo's allies in the Senate.

Sen. Ralph Recto said the move by LP claimants smacked of turncoatism.

"Two weeks ago, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Liberal Party, Nacionalista Party supported the (commission, al) process (to address the crisis). Even Cory Aquino urged them to stay the course. They swore!" he said. With reports from Marlon Ramos and Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, Nestor Burgos Jr. and Raj Badilla, PDI Visayas Bureau

Opposition eyes 'caretaker council,' plans 1-M strong rally to get military backing

By Philip C. Tubeza

A DAY after President Macapagal-Arroyo was occupied with calls for her resignation from key allies, members of the United Opposition (UNO) yesterday proposed the creation of a "caretaker council" to replace Ms Arroyo and her Vice President Noli de Castro.

Pitch various sectors already demanding that the President step down, the opposition now wants to convince the military to essentially withdraw its support for the Arroyo administration by staging mass and bigger rallies to be attended by a target crowd of one million.

"So the challenge is to have one million in the streets. If we can do that, we have a good chance," former Agrarian Reform Secretary Horacio "Boy" Morales, UNO executive council member, said in a press conference at the Quezon City Sports Club.

Morales said that the "caretaker council" would be responsible for holding new elections and overhauling the judiciary, Congress and other government institutions.

"We see the need to have credible elections and the caretaker council will do this. Ultimately, it is the people going to elections who will decide the leadership of the country. But in the meantime, there will be an OIC," he said.

Morales said the opposition was also studying other ways to file an impeachment complaint against De Castro in Congress for his alleged cheating in the last elections.

Former Sen. Loren Legarda said that De Castro, her rival in the last election, should take a similar step leaving Arroyo as President facing the same people who are currently in power.

"It will not change the picture. It is like jumping from the frying pan into the fire. It must be the tandem, because random fraud was committed and so that incident must step down," Legarda said.

Dr. Pilita Former President Corazon Aquino; 10 members of the President's Cabinet and the Makati Business Club joined the clamor for Ms Arroyo to step down. Religious groups, lawyers and educators earlier sought her resignation.

But the military has so far remained neutral.

Morales noted that retired Force Chief of Staff Gen. Abo's statements after 10 members of the Cabinet resigned did not include a categorical statement of support for the administration.

"If you look at the statement of Esmeralda, he did not say that he's supporting the government. He said he will protect the people. That's a good indication of how the military will act," Morales said.

But Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile noted that the opposition had failed to launch massive rallies before. In mid-1986 should have a plan and see if there were enough people to pressure the President out of office.

"I want to know what is it that you have to convince me to join such an adventure. Because since I join, I commit my life on it. You cannot do a revolution without committing yourself to die. If you are not willing to die, do not talk about revolution," he said.

As this developed, some members of the opposition now fear that the dire might become the main beneficiaries should Ms Arroyo be ousted from power.

Sen. Juan Marcel "JV" Ejercito said that members of the "elite" have joined the call for the President to step down because they become the main beneficiaries when it was UNO that worked hard for the President's removal.

"The problem is we started the fight. We were the ones who labored hard for many years. Meron ng isang figure nation-wide ang mahirap na laroang, mahirap na ang groups ni Cory and avail victory (We have been meeting. Now that the picture is becoming clearer, Cory's group and civil society decided to join)" Ejercito told his party mates.

He said UNO should organize and he noted to show that it is the dominant force among the many groups calling for the President's resignation.

METRO
Edited by Ever C. Dizon

NBP to give landlines to inmates

By Jocelyn R. Uy

DIMATES of the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) will soon have access to landline telephones.

In an effort to curb the smuggling of cellular phones in the penitentiary, NBP officials have decided to install telephones for use at the maximum security prison.

"We hoped this move decongest inmates from smoking in cellular phones," NBP Superintendent Antonio Leopardo told the business in a phone interview.

According to Leopardo, extensive inspections by jail officers often result in the discovery of cellular phones among confiscated items smuggled into the jail facility.

"If phone booths are available here inside the jail, they don't have to use cell phones to call their families or relatives," he said.

As of last week, at least five cash-operated phone booths had been installed at the maximum security compound.

However, Leopardo added that the telephones were not yet in operation because Bureau of Corrections Director Vicente Ventura wanted to study the procedures for their use.

Under proposed procedures, inmates wishing to use the landlines would have to buy a phone card worth P50 from various Identity Port Exchange stores in the prisons.

These stores would be run by NBP officers.

But more phone booths will be set up next week, said Leopardo.

The putting up of phone booths inside the prisons will also help NBP officials monitor the activities of the inmates, many of whom are high-profile convicts, he said.

Callers would have to sign a logbook, recording their name and the persons they wish to talk to and the time of their call.

An NBP staff member would be assigned to each booth to do the monitoring, explained Leopardo.

He emphasized that the availability of phones inside the jail would help ease the boredom of prisoners.

"These (phones) would be of great help to inmates when families live far away. The least these could do is to let inmates get in touch with their loved ones," the prison superintendent said.

The telephones are being provided by the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

STREET-LEVEL CONDO
Several men sleep on a sidewalk on Roxas in Manila. Lack of visitor have many people in Metro the streets of the city

An officer and a gentlewoman

By Nancy C. Carvajal

SENIOR Inspector Virginia Tapayes, who heads the Caloocan City Police Women's and Children's Desk (Cawidesk), is very comfortable with the role of mother hen.

She watches the media with intense interest—any story would have the victim in the limelight.

The small, unwedded woman police officer most feared the wrath of the girl rapists by former congressman Romeo Jalosjos, who at once serving a jail sentence in the city's New Bilibid Prison for the crime. A face-to-face encounter between the two was eventually exposed in the media.

"[The] media should have left her alone even if she was already convicted. Because the way she killed and Jalosjos was sent to jail," Tapayes said.

Victims protected

She acknowledges to be controlled in her actuations. She is a compassionate lady and they made every effort to see to it that the victims' identities were protected all the time.

If victims were not identified, the police officer said, they would be identified and attacked, too.

She said her attempts to protect victims earned her the ire of some reporters who wanted to know details of crimes.

"I had been reprimanded a lot of times by cub beat reporters because I only release the true story [to] media and Jalosjos was sent to jail," Tapayes said.

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A teacher, too

As if her tasks as police officer is not a full-time job already, the chief of the Caloocan Police's Women's Desk also finds her time [illegible] Literature, English and Filipino to kindergarten kids aged five to six.

After handling investigations law—dressed in black slacks and white long-sleeved blouse—in a classroom with drawings of cartoon characters on the walls.

She has been teaching for children since 1997. "It is part of the police's job to reach out to people in the community as part of our community relations," she explained. She reasons for finding the time to teach school children despite her police work.

She added that education and knowing one's rights were still the best way to prevent abuses of women and children.

She added that police were [illegible] not strict and said in this office, he also had to be brought outside the kindergarten.

"The interaction with small children also served as some sort of therapy for me," Tapayes said.

She felt that the 8-11 morning session, Monday to Friday, with small children helped her to relax.

"My fondness for children and hunch for storytelling made it easier for me to don't hear being rejected [time to kindergarten level]," she said.

She added that the discipline she learned and imposed as teacher-officer was a great help in dealing with her young students.

She said she had some up-with ways to do to make it easier to teach children and make them understand the discipline.

Hand signals

Schoolchildren, according to the police officer, can't read but they automatically [illegible] quiet when the raised her two fingers and they saw that their voices were quieted. They smiled when the two fingers were apart, forming a heart.

The chief of the police desk for putting up the Kindergarten-COP learning center after a conservative relations summit in 2001 sponsored by the Philippine National Police.

"I was also partly inspired by the donald Schwarzenegger movie Kindergarten Cop, and I took the part and the attitude," she admitted.

She said the director set up a hand on those who wanted to attend her classes. Anyone who wanted to learn was welcome.

Inspiration

Tapayes said her decision to launch the project was also prompted by her experiences with a 13-year-old victim who could not even name her mother.

"I told the victim to come to my office when she had time and I started tutoring her," she said.

Now, the girl was enrolled in a local school, the police officer said.

Tapayes said the feeling of fulfillment in being able to help victims mend on their own was something she could bring home and cherish.

As to dating or her, putting up the learning center was quite easy. Grandchildren poured in as many people were willing to do their chores.

The classroom, painted in attractive colors, is located in the middle of a building at the back of the Caloocan City Police Headquarters along Rizal Road.

Its chairs and black boards were contributed by other police officers, Tapayes said.

She said her method of teaching was patterned after the Montessori system of teaching where my children studied when they were young, Tapayes said.

She added that her specialties in child psychology and education do college had paid off. The woman police officer, who wanted to be a doctor, studied Bachelor of Science in Criminal Technology.

In the learning centers, no officers are asked to register but the of P20 and a calendars dash contributions of one pesos, the only requisite parents have.

"The amounts were intended to give parents a sense of responsibility in their children's education," the police officer said.

Christmas parties

She added that the money raised was also used to fund other activities for children, like Christmas parties.

But she stressed, "We don't force [the parents] to come up with the P1 contribution. If they could not afford it, we don't take it against them."

In addition to her job as teacher and a police officer, the chief of the Women's Desk also often acts as counselor to both victims and suspects, particularly minors.

Being a widow who set two children also acts as grown up given her enough time to take on other tasks aside from law enforcement.

After rules first met Tejano when his wife filed a complaint against him for domestic cruelty, dubbed her at first.

But, as they talked, Adur said he found out that Tejano adopted the tough stance so people would show respect for his position.

Licensing

"She started with Mr. to Ms. to made us realize that differences in marriage could be resolved as long as the couple talked and understand to each other," Adur said.

Adur and his wife said they would use the police officer every time they had a fight.

"But the frequency and intensity of [those fights] had been [less to] by referral," Adur said.

Tejano wanted as a parent issues, to 14 years ago. Since then she had received [illegible] records.

Mamerto cut of her top ten most outstanding police officers in 2003. Tejano expressed the view that, "Leaders are followers of what it is to [illegible]."

Police alert level in Metro lowered

THE POLICE yesterday downgraded its alert status in Metro Manila after intelligence and counterintelligence operations [illegible] on Friday.

"First, the reasons has subsided. Two, there is no visible threat [to the government]; no [illegible] the assessment," said Director Vidal Querol, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office.

"We are now on heightened alert status," he added.

As if a result, the police have raised and downgraded the alert level to the capital several times during the last few days. The decision to place Metro Manila on full alert appeared to depend on [illegible] actions.

On Friday, protesters converged on Ayala Avenue calling for President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation. Judge A. del Puerto

UP sets investiture of first woman president

ROMAN

THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines will hold the formal investiture of its 19th president [illegible] B. Roman, on July 11, 2 p.m., at the University Theater in Diliman.

Roman will be the first female to be president of UP since 1908.

The event will also mark the launching of the university plan for 2005-2010, dubbed "The UP Diliman Initiative in the 21st Century."

Roman, who holds a Doctor of Business Administration degree from the university, has three times chancellor of UP Diliman, the flagship campus.

As president, she will preside over the UP's centennial celebration in 2008, and one of her priorities will be to [illegible] Philippines, aimed at augmenting the University's budget and propelling it into its second century of existence.

In February 2005, she succeeded Francisco Nemenzo, who ended the [illegible] administration of UP, his alma mater.

Nemenzo stepped down as the UP Board of Regents was widely lauded in UP's seven constituent universities.

It was during Mr. Roman's tenure as chancellor that UP Diliman was patronized in registration system, effectively putting an end to the long queues that had characterized registration at the campus.

She also addressed the problem of faculty, union and workers, researchers, staff, and students—in particular the athletes, the Maroons to Gospel, and the Philippine Collegians—by setting up endowments, trust funds and [illegible].

2 kids left at home die in Marikina fire

By Edson C. Tandoc, Jr.

TWO CHILDREN had left their children at home in Marikina City and Ana Jane yesterday when their houses caught fire.

The 10-couple in-law, four-year-old daughter, had the [illegible] Marikina City electrical fire that two children.

Steven Salarda, 9, and his younger sister Gemmel, 6, died in the fire that hit their house at the corner A. Mabini and J.P. Rizal streets in Barangay Nangka at 3:44 a.m., BFD Head Gerardo said. The fire lasted an hour.

Their parents Alberto and Norma Galindo had gone to work Friday night, Galindo said.

Their youngest daughter Rica Mary, 2, who slept in the room of her aunt, escaped the flames.

In San Juan, the children of Cesar Uy were watching television in their sala about 8 a.m. when they noticed in the second floor of their house.

Uy and his wife had left their 12-year-old daughter and 7-year-old son to their house to repair the work, municipal fire chief Elvis Cabildo said.

The children fled their burning house on Lores Road in Barangay San Juan after neighbors saw the flames and alerted out to them.

A neighbor, Ismael Limgson, 40, was hurt in the incident. Cabildo said the damage on could have been electricity-related.

Meanwhile: P20 million in goods went up in smoke when fire razed the main commissary of the food chain Greenhop in Cainta at the 2.1 hour [illegible] road in Brgy. Munting Dilaw.

The blaze caused traffic build up on the West Service Road.

With Jocelyn R. Uy

Manila forest park gets reprieve

By Tina G. Santos

ENVIRONMENTALISTS can breathe a sigh of relief—at least for now.

Manila City Hall workers have stopped excavations for a raucous workers' building inside the Intramuros Burnt Path. Engineering archaeologists on a mission to excavate artifacts that could be buried in the construction site.

The Bastion of Huesos earlier said that it would allow the construction of the building along with archaeological digging.

But Joy Belmonte, vice governor of the Bastion of Huesos, [illegible] of Philippine Inc. (NAPI), told the business that they did not allow it be safety source.

"The plan is very small for all of us to be working there at the same time," Belmonte said.

She explained, "Safety-wise, there would be a problem. So we've agreed that coordination work will proceed once we determine that there are no more archaeological materials that may be uncovered from the site."

Belmonte's team started working in the park last Monday.

She said the local government was urging them to finish their work in three weeks, but she explained we can't [illegible] archaeological work will depend on the quality of artifacts that they would find.

"The more historical value the artifacts have, the longer it will be take us to finish our work. However, we will try our best to do it in three weeks," Belmonte said, adding that construction soon could [illegible].

Members of the Friends Foundation, the organization taking care of the 2.1-hectare property, said the city government's compliance with the archaeological demand was a welcome development.

"We're happy that the [illegible] finally listened to our [illegible]. It at least gives a chance for people to discover how rich our cultural heritage is," said Regina Hernandez, Bloom president.

The group has been opposing the construction of the building inside the park, saying the structure would result in the destruction of trees and foliage inside what is called Manila's "last lung."

The park was declared as archaeological site by the National Museum in April 2003.

Pieces of ceramic sherds, which museum specialists believe belonged to Chinese settlers who set up colony in what is now the 16th century, were found in the park recently.

Meanwhile, Belmonte encouraged students to visit the site and observe how the archaeological process was being done.

"We want to use them as the future stewards to the site because we want to educate them and raise awareness about the importance of archaeology" she said.

Minors rescued from den

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) arrested three people and rescued 11 female minors, mostly minors, in Quezon City yesterday morning.

Loreto Nonato Ano, chief of the NBI's Anti-Human Trafficking Division, said the people and the girls, aged 14-18, were arrested while going about their business along Tandang Sora.

Ano said they conducted the operation following mounting complaints from concerned residents.

The survivor of the girls were reportedly in exchange for [illegible] from P6,000 to P7,000 each.

The girls were turned over to the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Tina G. Santos

P150-B fowl industry moves fast to contain bird flu

THE PHILIPPINES, the only poultry-producing Asian country not to have been affected by bird flu, announced on Friday its first case of the disease on a backyard duck and chicken farm in Calumpit, Bulacan.

But Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said that while virus detected was the low-risk H5 strain, not the deadly H5N1 strain of the avian flu virus that has killed 54 people of 114 infected in Asia so far.

Officials said the strain, which was found in some baby Chrisllard duck eggs that were being randomly tested in preparation for export, was not deadly to humans.

As a precautionary measure, the said poultry exports, mainly to Japan, the number for most Philippine poultry exports, would be temporarily halted.

The domestic poultry industry which employs 500,000 people, is composed of large commercial farms and backyard farms which take side-connecting seeds from the big players.

Commercial raisers like San Miguel Foods Corp., SFM Swift Foods Corp., Robina Farms, Tyson Agrichief-ture and Vitarich Corp. said a worker in their poultry farms or hatchery is required to take as many as three full baths before entering the facility.

"To prevention operations, workers' hands are disinfected every 30 minutes to ensure food safety," explained Dra. Imelda Bulatadi, president of the Philippine Association of Broiler Integrators.

Full-contractor backyard farms are also required to adhere to these sanitary specifications, said Bulatadi, who is also vice president in San Miguel Foods.

"Proper sanitation are required in all facilities, no visitors are allowed in farms and plant workers must conform to strict guidelines. Only the general manager approves the entry of visitors, including customers," she added.

Bulatadi said the implementation of these sanitary measures was particularly critical in backyard and small holding farms in the face of the discovery that avian flu was now in the country.

"There must be proper disinfection and not just pour bottles of bleach. Proper disposal of dead birds by burning or burying are also required," notes Bulatadi.

She said the industry has conventional that the government establish commercialized poultry zones that would allow even the low areas in the country recognition-making in the export market.

"The local industry hopes to resume shipment of fresh boned chicken to Japan. We hope the industry recognizes this," said Bulatadi.

The poultry zones would need proper endorsements to the Paris-based Organization Internationale des Epizooties of the World Health Organization.

Bulatadi said the compartmentalized zones would be determined by natural geographic boundaries and/or single entry-exit to other compartments.

Government agencies would have to build surveillance databases to include a survey of all poultry holdings, including the final population. The surveillance group will also conduct randomization of broilers.

Movement between zones of live poultry and its by-products will be regulated through issuances of health certificates and shipping permits.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque said the identification of the strain found in Calumpit was still incomplete but assured the government "must do everything to ensure H5N1 does not enter the country."

Blood samples from the farm in Calumpit were collected and sent to a laboratory in Australia for further testing. Results on the specific strain are expected within a week, said Yap.

Yap said the H5 virus could have been brought into the country by migratory birds which go to the Candaba swamp in Pampanga.

The Calumpit farm where the baby was reared is close to the Candaba swamp.

Yap said there were clear indications that some domestic ducks and free-range poultry have mixed with migratory birds in the wetlands as marshes.

Yap said he has to ensure and health department have imposed a 3-km quarantine zone around the affected area, and implemented the immediate culling of affected flocks.

The big-commercial poultry farms and small- to medium-scale raisers which make up the United Broiler Raisers Association (Ubra) are far from the affected area.

The flu strain in the Calumpit farm, that ruined ducks and chicken, was discovered through a series of laboratory tests that were completed on June 29.

"The testers assisted to request India to thing thing and had the duck's eggs submitted to a counter check, as part of international standards in bird flu prevention. This is how we learned the chinese connotation," he said. Christine Cayabyab

A Way Out. A Way Forward.

Are there leaders who can offer a way out of the current crisis?
Are there leaders who can offer a way forward?

Not those who have betrayed our trust.
Not those who ask forgiveness without compunction.
Not those who have benefited from crimes committed against our country
Not those who fail to take a stand for truth and justice.

We cannot trust leaders who keep breaking public promises.
We cannot trust leaders who insult a sovereign but long-suffering people
by claiming that there are no alternatives to GMA, except worse.

We add our voices to those who dare "to speak truth to power."
We call on GMA: Step down!
We call on all those who stick with her, to step down with her.

We challenge the opposition leaders: Act decisively to lead us forward!
We call on citizen-leaders: Step up!

Who will lead our country?
No single group should presume to decide for us.
We assert our democratic right to choose our leaders through elections.
But we must have credible elections that really reflect the will of the majority
and not the manipulation by a minority.

How do we ensure credible elections?
We need a caretaker council that will prepare the way.

To be credible, the members of the council should represent
all those who have consistently taken a stand for truth, justice, righteousness.
To be credible, the members of the caretaker council
must be disqualified from running in the regular elections
that will choose those who will govern our country.

This is our moment of truth.
It is time to take a stand for truth and justice.

Unity 4 Truth and Justice

Website: www.unityfortruth.com

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Distributed by NewspaperDirect

RP nurse hailed for returning $2.6M to bank

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Labor and Employment yesterday lauded a Filipino nurse in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, who quickly returned 10 million riyals (about $2.6 million, or P150 million) that was erroneously credited to her bank account.

"The entire Filipino nation, and especially the nearly eight million Filipino migrant workers worldwide, are truly proud of your honest deed," DOLE Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas told Filipino nurse Melitza Anne Chan, 27, assistant to the dental department chief of the Marabi Hospital in Jeddah.

Chan, a native of Manduriao, Iloilo, discovered the 10 million riyals in her account while applying for a visa to the United Kingdom last week, according to labor attache Bulyok Nilong, head of the Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Jeddah.

Nilong said Chan rushed back to the Saudi-Hollande Bank in Jeddah to inform it about the error.

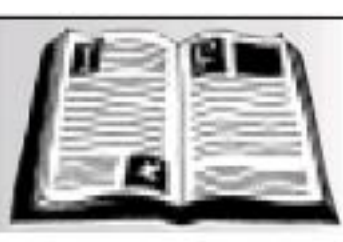
The labor attache said the erroneous entry was traced to a typographical error committed by the bank. Saudi-Hollande had credited the amount on February 2005 but did not detect it until it was informed by Chan.

Chan learned of the error only after the British consulate in Jeddah informed her it could not accept her bank statement because of the huge amount in her account.

Sto. Tomas said Chan's honesty "does tremendous honor to the overseas Filipino workers validating their innate honesty, quality, trustworthiness and reliability in the global economy."

Nilong said Polo and the Philippine Consul-General Pendosina Lomondot, together with Chan's employers at the hospital, have acknowledged the nurse's honest deed.

THE DAILY GOSPEL



Sunday, July 10, 2005
15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Isaiah 55:10-11

God's word is creative

Thus says the Lord:
As the rain and the snow come down
from the heavens and do not return
till they have watered the earth,
making it yield seed for the sower
and food for others to eat,
so is my word that goes forth out of my mouth:
it will not return to me idle,
but it shall accomplish my will,
the purpose for which it has been sent.

2nd Reading: Romans 8:18-23

Straining in hope for a new creation

Brothers and sisters: "I consider that the suffering of our present life cannot be compared with the Glory that will be revealed and given to us. All creation is eagerly expecting the birth in glory of the children of God. For if now the created world was unable to attain its purpose, this did not come from itself, but from the one who subjected it. But it is not without hope; for even the created world will be freed from this fate of death and share the freedom and glory of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pangs of birth. Not creation alone, but even ourselves, although the Spirit was given to us as a foretaste of what we are to receive, we groan in our innermost being, eagerly awaiting the day when God will give us full rights and rescue our bodies as well.

Gospel: Matthew 13:1-23 or 13:1-9

A seed that bears fruit

Jesus left the house and sat down by the lakeside. As many people gathered around him, he got in a boat. There he sat while the whole crowd stood on the shore, and he spoke to them in parables about many things.

Jesus said, "The sower went out to sow and, as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground where there was little soil, and the seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was not deep. But as soon the sun rose the plants were scorched and withered because they had no roots. Again other seeds fell among thistles; and the thistles grew and choked the plants. Still other seeds fell on good soil and produced a crop; some produced a hundredfold, others sixty and others thirty. If you have ears, then hear!"

Commentary

Jesus sits and teaches the crowds by the lake. He talks of seed sown, broadside that falls everywhere: on the path that's eaten by birds, among thin soil and hard ground where it was scorched and among thistles where it's choked and finally in the field and there are crops—some one hundred fold, some sixty, others thirty! What a story! What potent seed! To produce such a crop—even thirty fold is massive returns—imagine an investment with a thirty-fold return in one year! Let alone one hundred! But where it falls, what the ground of hearts is like, makes a lot of difference. Even the birds will at least take it and drop it somewhere else. Some of us will sprout and sag. Others of us will not last without a lot of coddling. And even in a field, with a community where the Word is meant to fall—there will be a widespread spectrum of food for others-justice, bread, hope, life. How is our field doing? What are we coming up with when the seed of the Word of God is sown among us—only on Sunday—very thin. It needs to be sown liberally weekly in small groups and nurtured for conversion and harvest.

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AFP: We take no sides; leave us alone

By Dona Pazzibugan and Luige del Puerto

AFP BASE: Brawn chief of staff Gen. Eliseo dela Cruz yesterday called for a peaceful resolution of the political crisis and assured local government officials of security reforms aimed at taking the military to take sides on the conflict.

Director General Jesus Versoza of the Philippine National Police (PNP) said he had also instructed police officers in a separate statement to withhold statements yesterday.

The political impasse that may or may not be resolved peacefully, potentially," Aduc said in a "statement to the nation" broadcast on radio. "The AFP will not in any manner participate in any extra-constitutional resolution of the crisis," said Abu.

"We ... appeal to all sectors of society to refrain from calling on the AFP to take sides. The AFP should be allowed to follow the path to professionalism and to remain apolitical," he added.

The memorandum order 1110-2010, strong military has resorted effective groups to extra-constitutional support from President Macapagal-Arroyo in key Cabinet members, political and business allies abandoned her in the face of allegations she cheated in last year's election.

Also took over the armed forces on Oct. 29. He was due to retire this month but Mr. Aquino extended his term to mid-next August in the wake of the "Glorietagate" scandal.

Alarming precedent

"The threat at the pole here set an alarming precedent regarding changes to leadership," said Abu, referring to the ouster of presidents Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada. "We should learn from history and implement new solutions," Abu said.

Abu said current the military was "solidly" behind Mr. Aquino but following the mass resignations of 10 key Lakas of the Philippines (Lakas) Cabinet members and opposition-controlled politicians Abu said the military would not intervene in the controversy.

"From our end, we will strictly adhere to the rule of law as mandated in our Constitution. I will not tolerate violations of the Constitution and disregard for military rules and regulations," Abu said in his statement yesterday.

The apparent increased commander's loyalty of garnishing among senior officers over suspicions that the military was involved in tipping past presidents before the.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, a former military chief, has disclosed that a number of junior officers and commanders are threatening to resign en bloc unless he resigns under the military officials who allegedly conspired with the President to rig last year's vote are investigated.

In his statement, Lumibao urged his men: "We must resist all temptations in accordance by virtue of our sworn pledge that undermine our adherence to the chain of command and diminish the professionalism in officers of the law."

Resist temptations

"Our pledge of service dictates that our codes of action is time like these. To stand united and remain loyal to the Constitution, to the duly constituted and to the Republic of the Philippines. In this light, we continue to serve and stand by our president and commander in chief," the PNP chief said.

"The call of the times is the overarching challenge to conquer and uphold the rule of law, which is the very foundation of our nation. The foundation of unshaken resolve and unflinching loyalty set the tone for us all to stand hall and work together to save PNP," Lumibao said.

Lt. Col. Bartolome Baclig, the Philippine Air Force spokesperson, said the military had become a "reliable factor" in these uncertain times. He said "the AFP has matured enough and not has learned to many things from previous events."

With a report from Melvin Gascon

Pichay accuses Lina, Parayno of corruption

By Michael Lim Ubac and Leila Salaverria

SUBSIDY: Bid for Rep. Prospero Pichay, Batelec Senator Rep. Mauricio Libanan and Bataclan Gov. Rep. Monico Puentevella accused the "Cojuangco-Aquino" of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Guillermo Parayno of corruption.

In a press conference in Quezon City, Pichay, Libanan and Puentevella condemned the resigned Cabinet officials for displaying a "holier-than-thou" attitude. "They are the ones who were illegally cursed with corruption.

Pichay et al. based on allegedly anomalous contract with the Bureau of Customs (BOC) worth more 910.00 million every year with LIC Logistics, Inc., a company incorporated by Lina's godson Comelec Commissioner and Parayno, resigned Bureau of Internal Revenue commissioner.

The lawmakers released documents showing that although both Lina and Parayno have left the government, they have divested themselves of their interests in LIC Logistics. Lina should have never accepted the top BOC post considering that at least 10 Lina-owned companies continued to do business with the BOC.

Pichay said the position was offered to Lina by resigned Finance Secretary Purisima who, he said, was a business partner of the Cojuangcos.

Lina and Purisima then exhibited "clear conflict of interest" with the survey of LIC Logistics into a contract with the BOC, said Pichay.

"They will be sending a list of money. They are the ones who smuggled in and they are holier-than-thou," said Pichay who will file a resolution with the House committee on good government to probe the matter.

He dismissed that Purisima et al. planned to contract Mr. Aquino to come up the extended.

But Lina remember said he believed the accusations of corruption against him was an offshoot of his resignation along with several other Cabinet members who had called on the president to resign.

He further questioned the accusation's timing, saying he had been customs commissioner since February this year and yet Pichay only revealed the alleged anomalous contract now.

He also said he had divested from the Lina Group of Companies (LGC Logistics) before accepting the customs' portfolio and that he was willing to face the charges against him.

He cannot cut truth out of his conscience with press respect. But that was only we came up with colliquating inaccuracies," Purisima said.

One of the mitigating measures included the relocation of tariff categories of oil from 5 to 3 percent, the DOF said.

Purisima has supposedly been telling friends privately that he suspected Mr. Aquino of influencing the Supreme Court in suspending implementation of the EVAT law.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez But. Is denied that Mr. Aquino had done any such thing.

Gonzalez also said that some of the pro-

posals he said the others were asking for things to be outside an official the resignation of the Commission on Elections and continued government efforts to get the contested Jun Miguel Cojuangco alleged to have been bought by individuals Bonding Corporation acting over levy funds.

Commenting on Parayno's documents about Mr. Aquino, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said: "It's not within the BOC jurisdiction. That's a matter for the Commission on Elections," he added. As President, she always has the interest of the country at heart and I think her suspicion on the e-VAT law is basis."

GMA wanted e-VAT delayed, 'defectors' claim

Continued from A1

watching next year.

The economic team, led by the DOF has "considered encouraging proposal" that the national government would indefinitely value-added tax (VAT) on large business dollar as early as 2011, with the e-VAT law in place.

With the e-VAT's imposition, Arroyo et al. believe that the government would be able to raise P1 billion to P5 billion monthly, or P12 billion to P15 million dollar, in potential revenues.

The supposition of having a non-dollar by 2009 would also have to be pushed back, he said. "When I accepted the job, the question I had was why our country is poor, considering that it is rich in natural and human resources," Purisima said. "I realized that it was because our government was putting huge losses that required regular borrowings."

"Without toll, therefore, was needed to raise revenues for the government."

The e-VAT law was a fiscal reform measure that was supposed to help raise revenues because of its effects on the purchasing power of consumers.

"The [Mr.Arroyo's] expressed desire to delay the VAT saying she was concerned with price impact. But that was only we came up with colliquating inaccuracies," Purisima said.

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Drilon behind Cabinet 'coup,' says Palace

Continued from A1

Senate President Franklin Drilon, president of the Liberal Party headed his allegations as absolutely baseless.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima and nine other government officials resigned on Friday and urged 9th Arroyo to herself step down, claiming she had lost her credibility and ability to govern.

A Malacañang official, who refused to be named, said Drilon was one of Purisima's confidantes. "He was the first person Purisima called when the controversy erupted over the TRO on the E-Vat," the official said.

There's no conspiracy," Purisima declared when asked about the LP's involvement in the Cabinet resignations.

Hyatt meeting

Drilon was at the Hyatt Regency Hotel meeting with a group of Cabinet officials on the eve of their call for Ms Arroyo to resign, according to a Palace source.

Another source also claimed to be privy to the Hyatt meeting said Drilon was present when the Cabinet officials discussed their plan to call for Ms Arroyo to step down.

But the same source said Drilon did not say much or urged the resignations.

"He listened to the discussions," said the source.

Aside from the 10 officials—Purisima, ex-Philippine Investment Promotions Board (PIPB) Secretary Buddy Salmon, Trade Secretary Ester Santos, Budget Secretary Rolito Bonoan, National Anti-Poverty Commission Secretary Imelda Nicolas, Agrarian Reform Secretary Rene Villa, Environment Secretary Jose Atienza, Presidential Spokesperson Ricardo Saludo, National Economic Development Authority Commissioner Guillermo Parayno and Customs Commissioner Alberto Lina—present with Drilon at the Hyatt meeting were Labor Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla.

Sec. Baldoz and Lotilla left the hotel afterwards with Bonoedan while the rest stayed at the hotel. It was Purisima who invited the group to stay at the hotel.

The source said Drilon had previously met with the group when he hosted breakfast for them more than three weeks ago.

That breakfast meeting was the group talking about their discussions with President Arroyo in another meeting.

On the night the group gathered at the Hyatt, one of the things they were discussed was the trip made by Purisma and Abad to Hong Kong to see Dr. Cayetano, who is said to have connivity to Mr. Aquino on the 2004 election.

The source said that another source had mentioned the trip involved "consulting Dr Carlos to take over after the President resigned."

Yesterday Abad admitted that he and Purisma did go to Hong Kong last weekend to see Dr Carlos about their plan to oust the Cabinet.

But they claimed they only asked Dr Carlos if he was ready to take on the presidency.

Abad revelled that Dr Cayetano was pissed by their plan and said he needed more time to think.

Before July 5, the source also said the "Hyatt 10" also met with former Vice President Teofisto Guingona and former Catholic Bishops to discuss about their call for Ms Arroyo to step down.

Sequence of events

The Inquirer sources said Del Rosario's resignation on Friday showed the hand of LP Architect Jesse Robredo's supporters influenced. (The LP duo split; story on Page A2.)

"The resignations was meant to fight

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"The resignations was meant to fight

FVR factor . . .

Continued from A1

setbacks. At the time, Ramos' line that president won't last another day if nothing drastic was instituted to arrest the rapid erosion of her power.

Ramos' call failed to gain traction. He said Drilon:

"It is by divine providence that everything left in the right place at the right time," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita in the first Cabinet press briefing following the announcement by Senate of Mr. Aquino's win as Malacañang. "Former President Ramos gave a good opportunity to show that he is fully at the helm of the President," Ermita said.

"Everybody knows Ramos. He has the lindsay of active and retired military personnel. He has the trust of the business community having been a favorite OS wife who succeeded in turning the economy around during his term," said the lawmaker.

Ramos was a former AFP chief of staff and defense secretary under the late President Cory Aquino.

As president-member of Lakas, Ramos had the ears of many powerful political families who control the House of Representatives and some local government posts, he said.

He noted that the "Cabinet coup" had already succeeded through Lakas and Ramos seemed to help blood to drop in during the party caucus, finishing Dr. Bataller no signs. It was the first time the left Malacañang this week.

Defining moment

"This is our defining moment," said Zobel, who served as the emcee, following Ramos' call for Lakas members and the country at large to "join the ship of the state" instead of deserting it.

What's the good you can?

"My chief objective President is the only person who can constitutionally effect lasting and meaningful changes in the Constitution through Charter change," said Zobel.

Lakas is for changing the system. The problem is not the personalities, but the system. You can put the Pope in Malacañang, and he will still fail because the system will make him fail. But before I fail there has to be a wholesale systemwide change of our setup and the President is the only one person at the moment who can do it without any political cost," Zobel said.

Pilmet asked whether Ramos' action had the imprimatur of the party, he said. "He did it as his own to save the country."

Concessions?

Zobel could not say whether Lakas, through Ramos, had asked concessions from Mr. Aquino. Ermita and Ramos did not seek any favors.

But it was evident that Ramos would now have his way to the efforts to move the nation from the presidential to the parliamentary system, said another Lakas lawmaker.

In the party caucus at Sofo Hotel, Ramos rejected the proposal before the Rotary Club of Manila on July 7 to the standard-bearer of a "Team Unity" ticket that Lakas would unite with Cha-Cha-ga of the Kaduluhan Inc.

During the resignation of Ms Arroyo was not the solution to the current crisis, Ramos said the succession would be created through a joint congressional session "with half powers to prescribe policy reforms, executive actions and promote endorsers."

Under the Ramos timeline, once the committee is created, Congress will convene as a constituent assembly to effect necessary changes in the constitution, particularly the shift to a parliamentary system. The constituent assembly will then campaign will follow in January, ratification will be January or February and elections in May.

He only means what Ms Arroyo will have to step down by May. That is the price she has to pay," said the lawmaker, referring to the Speech of the Nation on July 26. "Ramos will not become the next prime minister once the new parliament is formed.

Strong voice

The lawmakers hinted that Ramos—even without congressional tabling anything from the Arroyo—effectively imposed upon her that he would have a strong voice in the months leading to the change of government.

"Ramos will be a figurehead from now on," said the lawmaker.

Opposition Sen. Benigno Lacson said Ramos has become the "de facto president" running the government. Lacson said Ramos was directing most with Ms Arroyo, who threw his support behind Mr. Aquino at the official inaugural Friday. Dr. Ubanos has been an active proponent of the move to the parliamentary system.

He said the commission proposed by Ramos must start functioning at "a rate of twenty-four hours" if they would meet the deadline to the parliamentary system.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. shared Lacson's view.

"The sound the Constitution proposed from Mr. Ramos to a more consideration to some like-minded senators reveals his strong capacity to govern and lead to reign," Pimentel said. With a report from Jamie Lallop-Secretary Cel Calmaquian, Jr. and Christine O. Avendaño

Manalo barges into semis

MANILA. Award of $20,000 cash prize

KAOHSIUNG, Taiwan—Filipino Marlon Manalo continued his magical run, winning the last four racks to edge former champion Mika Immonen of Finland, 11-10, yesterday and advance to the semifinal round of the 2005 World Pool Championship here.

Trailing 7-9, Manalo capitalized on two clever safeties to tie the score at 9-9, moved ahead by landing nine on the 10th rack and clinched the win on Immonen's three attempt on the No. 6 ball on the 20th.

"Many segments a while, sobi ko—humiliate na yan, Pilipino ka. Kaya, I knew it was my chance," said Manalo after completing the come-from-behind victory at the Kaohsiung Business Exhibition Center.

A former amateur champion from Mandaluyong, Manalo posted shutout wins in his last two rounds, 13-0 over Taiwan's Huang Chien-chu in the rounded 32 and 13-0 over Chen Ning-shan in the final 16.

Immonen's downfall started with a bad shot on the nine ball in the 17th rack after a volley by Manalo, who went on make it 8-9.

The 29-year-old Manalo tied it after his counter gave the Filipino another opening following a difficult shot. Manalo then easily held onto to take a 10-9 lead, but found himself in trouble after a successful break on the 20th.

Immonen seemed on the way to knotting the score, but the Finn shocking missed an easy cutshot pocket shot on the 6-ball, letting Manalo to finish the job.

"My game with Mika was so odd not for me," said Manalo, although he had beaten the 2001 world champion recently in Manila, 9-7, in an exhibition breakfast race.

Manalo, who assured of a $20,000 prize, will meet 26-year-old Taiwanese Jeo Wender Wu/Chen-ching in the semifinals today.

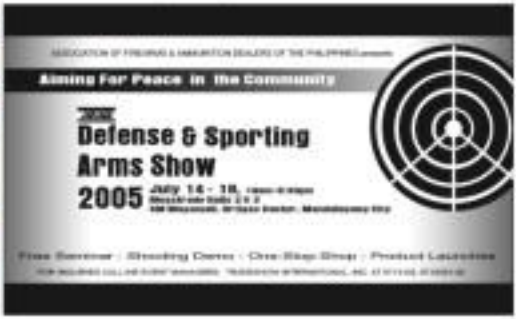
Wu easily beat 2000 champion Thorsten Hohmann (Germany), 11-5.

Manalo had a shaky start, committing a scratch on his opening break then another one in the second rack.

Despite his twin errors, the 28-year-old Filipino still managed to take the first rack after two consecutive innings.

However, the Finn ended Manalo's 20-rack win streak in the third rack and won four straight racks to make it 4-2. The lead then swung four more times before Immonen, the 2001 champion, broke out of a 7-7 all-board stretch and won nine racks.

GINO Perez (13) and Nestor David (7) of the UP Maroons tackle UST Tigers' Warren de Guzman for possession in yesterday's ovation of a match at the Big Dome.



Tams, Maroons win; Archers take on Eagles

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE EASTERN didn't even need a big game from league star Armond Santos to cruise to an 85-66 victory over the University of the Sans in the 68th UAAP season opener yesterday at the Araneta Coliseum.

Mark Isip canned the Tamaraws' offensive lead, scoring 20 points and landing clean 13 rebounds. Rookie playmaker Jimar Villanueva and Jeff Chan contributed for 25 markers, while Santos delivered 16 points and 10 rebounds.

Earlier, University of the Philippines staged a furious rally in the final minutes to outrank past Santo Tomas, 69-66.

Rhenwin Bitoy Santos shot 13 of his 19 points in the final quarter, including the game-winning triple in the last 36.2 seconds.

An ABC acquaintance is expected when rivals La Salle and Ateneo collide today at 4 p.m. following the 2 p.m. curtain-raiser between Adamson and Technological.

FEU coach Bert Flores, who replaced Nic Rami, confessed that calling after shots is the highly-touted Tamaraves was a tough challenge.

"The pressure is there," said Flores, veteran coaching staff includes former FEU stars Johnny Abarrientos and Glen Capacio.

The Maroons trailed by nine, 54-63, with 2:02 left before Mike Ybanez's three-point play and Santos' triple sparked a 6-0 rally.

Nuico, a former La Salle headmaster, capped the 11-1 charge that gave UP a 66-64 lead with 58.3 seconds remaining.

Emeric Pablekan secured the lead for the Tigers, 66-65, but Santos responded with a three-pointer to lift the Maroons ahead 69-66.

The scores
First game
UP (85)—Isip 20, Ybanez 13, Nuico 11, Ybanez 10, Dela G. Aquinaldo 6, Santos 6, Nieto 4, Abrenica 2, Cuadrado 2, Ignacio 0, Rosario 0.
UST (68)—De Guzman 18, Pinlac 13, David 10, Cruz 8, Cuevas 7, Evangelista 6, Perez 4, Alfaro 0, Cortez 0, Chavez 0, Ilano 0.
Quarters: 16-19, 29-28, 54-63, 85-66
Second Game
FEU (83)—Ong 20, Villanueva 12, Chan 12, Santos 10, Amposta 9, Alcuin 6, Abrogena 5, Bienvenido 4, Villanueva 2, Wallace 2, Alcuin 0, Sanchez 0, Andam 0.
AdU (68)—Bonleon 20, Guzman 15, Asuncion 7, Raymundo 6, Espiritu 5, Mina 5, Pangan 5, Dagohoy 3, Lumagui 2, Carmona 0, Bonifacio 0, Medina 0, Lopez 0.
Quarters: 19-13, 38-30, 57-51, 83-68

The WORLD

Editor: Lucretia B. Bunoz

Police yet to name any suspect as toll feared to pass 50

LONDON—Police investigating the London bomb blasts were Saturday probing extremists groups linked to al-Qaida as recovery teams tried to pull yet more bodies from a wrecked subway train, fearing the final death toll could climb well above the current 50.

Investigators have not as yet named any suspects in connection with the worst attack since the Second World War.

However, some newspapers said police had asked European counterparts for information on Moroccan cleric Mohammed al Fayhani, who lived in Britain for 16 years before vanishing from his north London home last year, reportedly to Pakistan.

Al Fayhani, 45, heads the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM), blamed for attacks that killed 45 people in the Moroccan city of Casablanca in May 2003.

The independent said al-Fayhani was linked to Abu Qatada, a Palestinian cleric based in London who is considered the "spiritual head" of al-Qaida in Europe, and who is currently detained under British anti-terrorism laws.

Another paper, the Sun, said police were also hunting Syrian-born Spanish national Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, thought to have links to a Spanish al-Qaeda cell dismantled after the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States.

According to several reports, Nasar lived in London between 1995 and 1998.

As the hunt continued, a second al-Qaida-linked group claimed responsibility for the blasts, three on London's underground rail system and one on a bus, in a statement on the Internet.

"A group of mujahideen from a division of the Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades piled blow after blow on the infidel capital, the British capital, leaving dead and injured," said the statement. Its authenticity could not be verified.

Shortly after Thursday's attacks a statement claiming responsibility was posted in the name of the "al-Qaida Organization—Jihad in Europe."

As one of the biggest British police probes ever mounted took shape, around 100 feet below the streets of London, a far more grisly investigation was continuing.

On Thursday morning when one bomb ripped apart a packed commuter bus and three others tore through carriages on the London Underground subway service, the worst blows was wreaked on the underground's Piccadilly Line.

At least 21 people died when a bomb exploded on a train travelling between King's Cross and Russell Square stations in the city center, but some reports warned this toll could rise by as much as 30.

Hints into the devastation that emergency services have not been able to get to all the dead ranges from grim fears that the trained security specialist under the rolling stock or cables.

Engineers were considering detaching some of the carriages and towing them back to King's Cross, allowing investigators better access to the gruesome hit parts of the train, reports said.

Police have made no official comment on their investigation into the perpetrators other than to vow to bring them to justice.

London's Metropolitan Police would "hunt every stone" to bring the bombers, London's police chief, Commissioner Ian Blair, told reporters at a Friday news conference.

A key part of the investigation is likely to be the painstaking examination of hours of security camera footage, both on the underground and around Tavistock Square, where a bomb blew apart a Number 30 bus, killing at least 13 people.

British newspapers focused Saturday on the anguish of those whose loved ones are missing and feared to have been crushing on one of the ill-fated trains or the bus.

Much like in New York after the September 11, 2001 attacks, handwritten posters have sprung up at train stations as relatives appeal desperately for information.

For many newspapers, 28-year-old Hasina Islam has become a representative face of London's loss.

A UNION flag flies at half-mast over the Houses of Parliament in London, July 8 in commemoration of the victims of terrorist bombings in underground trains and a double-decker bus. AFP

Flowers, stiff upper lip Brits' gritty response

By Chris Wright

LONDON—Flowers for the dead and a stiff upper lip comprised the essence of Londoners' gritty response to the bombings which defaced their city amid promises that the British capital's spirit will not be broken.

People young and old left flowers and remarks as well as messages of condolence near the scenes of the carnage which followed the attacks on three Underground trains and a bus which together left at least 50 people dead and more 700 injured on Thursday.

A poignant scene piled in a fluorescent yellow jacket carefully placed flowers on Friday near where 13 people were killed on a number 30 bus at Tavistock Place in an explosion which ripped the roof off the double-decker vehicle, leaving it a mangled wreck.

On the day that head of state Queen Elizabeth II visited London for visiting to the hospitalized some of some of the injured it was the upmost, socially symbolical meanings of shock and concern which underscored the poignancy of the tragedy.

"Your think your self London is so" one such note left at Kings Cross station, where at least 21 people died, asked of the bombers.

"Let me take you by the hand and lead you through the streets of London. I'll show you something to make you change your mind," the British were more restrained.

Shortly, a person signing himself simply "a resident" had written: "Deeply shocked and heartbroken."

Floral tributes by the dozen were laid near all four sites where secret embrowned fascists visited death and shock across quiet ordinary commuters from all nations and faiths who were going about their daily lives.

At St. Pancras Church, near where the bus was blown open at Tavistock Place, someone had even put out a message to the homeless or asylum seekers: "Wednesday is the day the great city, but today no one was walking back into an even stronger, greater city." AFP

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Hurricane Dennis pummels Havana, heads for Florida

KISS YOUR BAD BREATH GOODBYE
Bone and Purpose

HAVANA—Deadly hurricane Dennis pummeled Havana into the early morning hours on Saturday, ignoring trees and leaving the city's 2.2 million people in darkness after earlier killing 22 people in southeastern Cuba and Haiti.

The storm weakened as it neared Cuba from a ferocious Category 4 hurricane on the five-step Saffir-Simpson scale to a less severe Category 1, but its 210-mph winds still screamed through the deserted streets of the Cuban capital, where many live in decrepit colonial buildings.

Residents said trees were plucked from the ground.

The US National Hurricane Center in Miami said Dennis—the strongest hurricane recorded so early in an Atlantic storm season—would strengthen again on Saturday as it rearranged vast watery open water and skipped south of the Florida Keys.

Thousands of tourists and residents were evacuated from the vulnerable and low-lying island chain at the southern tip of the Florida peninsula, and many were prepared to leave coastal homes along the US Gulf Coast, where Dennis was expected to head on Sunday evening.

Natural gas and oil production was also curtailed at oil platforms in the US Gulf, where a quarter of US crude and natural gas comes from, many evacuated.

Cuban authorities had evacuated more than 600,000 people in different parts of the country as Dennis approached the southern city of Cienfuegos. But the measures, which usually allow the communist island to escape fatalities despite frequent hurricanes, failed to prevent 10 deaths on Thursday night.

Cuban President Fidel Castro said most of the victims died in collapsed homes in two coastal towns in Granma province. An 18-day old baby was among those who died, he said on state television, adding the hurricane "battered" him.

Officials said 15,400 of the subjects were tested 20,000 homes were destroyed or damaged. Television images showed scores of shipboard houses flattened by the storm.

On Friday, gusts of up to 149 mph also battered the city of Cienfuegos in Cienfuegos, where the storm made landfall. Reuters

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Brazil forces cut in price of AIDS drug

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil—Brazil's Health Ministry on Friday reached a deal with Abbott Laboratories Inc. to cut the price of the Kaletra AIDS drug after the country threatened last month to break the patent.

In a statement, Brazil's Health Ministry quoted Former Health Minister Humberto Costa, who led the negotiations with Illinois-based Abbott, as saying the agreed price would be "substantially" to the price of similar generic medicine made in India and local production.

Abbott said the deal did not specify the per-pill price.

"Essentially, then we getting volume discounts," said Abbott spokesperson Melissa Brun, explaining the two agreement allowed the government to increase significantly the number of patients treated while holding spending at current levels over the next few years.

"We're pleased to have reached an agreement that expanded access to Kaletra for Brazilian patients and preserved not one but Abbott's property rights which Abbott was not willing to negotiate," she said.

Brazil has in the past reached similar agreements with pharmaceutical companies after threatening to break patents, but it has never officially broken one.

The United Nations has lauded Brazil's AIDS prevention and treatment program, which provides free drugs for people with the disease and saves the government money by keeping them out of public hospitals. The program is expected to have 170,000 drug recipients this year.

The ministry said the price reduction would mean over the next six years. It said Abbott would also start transferring the technology to Brazil in 2006 to the local laboratories Fiocruz-Farmanguinhos, and smaller firms in Brazil.

Canada and the United States considered breaking patents on some antibiotics during the anthrax scare in 2001. Reuters

Beermen look set to wrap it up tonight

COACH Joeng Ordoñez has yet to lose three consecutive games to nine Finals stints with San Miguel Beer.

The Beermen will try to preserve that record when they go for the clincher against the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals in Game 5 of the Coca-Cola Asaboy PBA Fiesta Conference Finals today at the Cuneta Astrodome.

"Gentlemen's 2-1 lead in the series is not guarantee [of a win], " said the nine-champion Ordoñez after the Beermen grabbed a 3-1 edge with an 87-82 win in Game 4 Friday that moved them a game away from P3 heroism.

"Practice tomorrow may be a must. They could start talking around," said Ordoñez. "We want to get it as soon as possible."

Ordoñez is pinning his hopes on a core of elite-hungry players led by Danny Ildefonso, Olsen Racela, Jeondale Gonzalez, Dorian Peña and Ric Relosa. The Beermen last won a title in the 2001 All-Filipino Cup.

Ildefonso, the only player to win the MVP trophy in two consecutive years (2000-2001) over the last 13 PBA seasons, is again showing his deadly form.

Peña and Relosa have also been effective on the defensive end while Racela and Gonzalez have proven to be solid backcourt partners.

"No doubt, Talk 'N Text will come out with fire and make new adjustments on Sunday (today), the same way they did in Game 3," said Ordoñez.

Only one team in league history ... Crispa at the expense of Shell in the 1991 First Conference—has battled back from a 1-3 deficit to seize the championship.

But the Beermen are up against reigned rehab-case gun out of a 0-2 funk to snare the 2001 All-Filipino title from the Color Tigers.

"I hope we can do it again," said Talk 'N Text coach Joel Banal.

Jaime Honorio

SHIELD Clarion Pinto (left) tries to fend an offender but Beer TNT's Asi Taulava in Game 4 Friday. The rub was unimportant.

No easy way out for BAP —Aventajado

By Manong R. Cuerdo

WHILE the Philippine Olympic Committee "appreciates" Basketball Association of the Philippines president Jose Lina's desire to unify the basketball landscape, POC chair Robert Aventajado sees no more reason why the Olympic body should reconsider.

"This is like a court case," Aventajado said. "You must have evidence to re-open a case. To my knowledge, the BAP-sanctioned meeting over in the home they went to the POC," the venerable czar of the cage body's experience.

"The move of Mr. Lina can be appreciated by the POC," Aventajado added. "But they have to present something more for us to reconsider."

Aventajado said that the BAP can apply for a reinstatement with the Olympic body but it must be able to muster at least a three-fourths vote from another general assembly.

The BAP, for reneging on basic agreements in a supervenient but April, was suspended indefinitely by the May 25 general assembly. It was taken off the POC worry last June 30.

FIBA, the international basketball federation (Fiba) rejected the BAP suspension and banned the country from all foreign competitions including the Olympics and the Southeast Asian Games.

Hail Fil-Am!

SPECTATOR

AIX Mendoza

Tour heads for the hills

SARLOUIS, Germany—They run like legs and burn the lungs, but the Tour de France's punishing climbs can't come soon enough for Lance Armstrong.

After an unnerving first week of Giro racing, where crashes are a constant risk, threatening to hobbling to the hills and mountains of central France to start reassessing not the field of 188 riders left in the three-week race.

Armstrong's eighth stage brings the hardest climbs of the 1,336-meter (1,176-feet) Col de la Schlucht. It is not a factor in the standings as overall crews to follow on the Spa and Pyrenees.

But riders who are carrying injuries, who are fatigued and out of form, or who don't have Armstrong's climbing talents could tread.

"The race is about to start. We've made it through the first week, three hours and been any major crises, in fact I think it's been a pretty good week," Armstrong said Friday as the Tour started into Germany.

Australian sprinter Robbie McEwen won Friday's seventh stage.

Armstrong remained his overall lead by thanks ing a safe 52nd at the following pack in the same time as Hincapie. He avoided a serious the crisp-singlehanded that took down no riders.

The defending champ had over Discovery Channel teammate George Hincapie second at 39 seconds, while Kazakh rival Alexander Vinokourov still 1 minute, 2 seconds back in third place. AP

Raquel scores two key wins at SLLP

By Edwin Villanueva
Correspondent

DAGUPT Sound Office scored another triple or upset over West Bound while Speed Advantage handled his final warm-up for the Triple Crown by chasing top honors yesterday at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

The winners were both guided by one rider Fernando "Dinero" Raquel Jr. who followed up Speed Advantage's win in Ole Direction's Cup with another stakes-led ride on Sound Office in the Chairman's Cup.

"I was so pumped up after riding Speed Advantage so I felt I can score again on Sound Office" said Raquel in Filipino. "I just got lucky."

Sound Office, the hot third choice in the betting, outlasted heavy favorite West Bound down the stretch to complete a stretch-run victory and duplicated his win over the same gelding in the second leg of the Santa Ana Park Series last March.

The one-length triumph, worth P160,000 for the home treble, also came after Ole 5-year-old daughter of 1995 Kentucky Derby champion Thunder Gulch prevailed in the featured finale-third leg yesterday.

Robles, Raquel and Speed Advantage in front securing the home turn en route to a two-length victory over Wind Runner.

"I think he's ready for the final leg of the Triple Crown (Horseman's Cup) on July 29," said Raquel of Speed Advantage.

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Siblings top JVC event

EDSON and Ramon Iwamoto came away with big victories yesterday as they ended their duel to the country's best badminton players, bringing home Otto and Lloyd Reeves, respectively, to cop the singles crown in the JVC Open Badminton Championships finals at the Ghostly Action Center in Makati City.

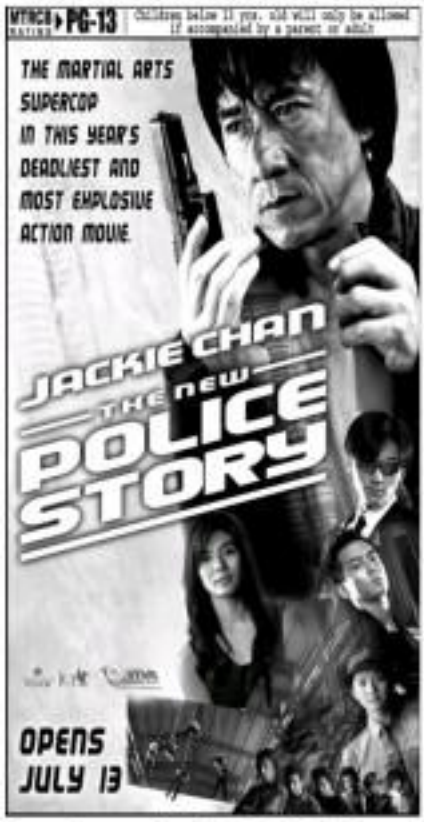
Ramon, the quiet kind of Golden Shuttle Foundation, proved too powerful and spilt three times national champion Otto of Alcoa, scoring victories with a convincing 11-2, 11-4 victory to claim his fifth straight singles crown in this national event sponsored by giant electronics firm JVC (Phil.) Inc.

Ramon, dominated the solitary and Badminton Hall (Bandung, 15-11, 15-11) to claim the event's singles crown for the second straight year.

Iwamoto actually inked the inaugural staging of this event backed by Alaska, Enure, Chris Sports, Body Power, Technomotion, Hotlac, Lucirol, Pioneer Life Insurance, Mizel in 2003.

The Americo also took the mixed doubles plate with a 11-3, 10-9 win over Rudi Setiyo and Theresa Dias of Del Shuttle Team-Valenzuela.

Laguna Spring downs Baguio five despite Fontanilla's 34 points



BAGUIO CITY—Spring Cooking Oil-backed Laguna bucked the 34-point explosion of Baguio's Melvin Fontanilla to win 84-76 and improve its record to 2-2 in the Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship Friday night at the University of Baguio gym here.

The Spring Cooking Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Laguna Gov. Teresita "Ningning" Lazaro inched ahead at the last, 42-40 and never looked back as they turned back the Lions' vigorated rallies behind the hot-shooting Fontanilla, who sank a record eight triples.

"When Fontanilla was hot, we made a great defensive effort on the rest of the Lions and that spelled the difference," said Spring coach Ric Sanchez.

The Lyons Investments/Brewers-backed Lions dropped to 1-4 in the tournament supported by Panasonic, Solpacco Liner, Cebu Pacific, Spring Cooking Oil, Scott, Globtex, Nature's Spring, Far Eastern Insurance, Skygo Motorcycles, Stella, Hapee Toothpaste, Unofficers, KSE Boat Products (Jeep Spinning), Ong Phg Leshac, Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza Cebu.

Action continues today with the Eastern Insurance-backed Courier facing the Iloilo Pharmacy of BIR president Robert Ty and continuing crossover Cagayan at 4 p.m. at the Olney Sports Complex.

The Laguna cagers opened a 73-60 lead and then weathered the Lions' fierce uprising, led by Fontanilla's last two triples, to preserve the victory.

Spalding hooks up with Coach E

SOLUDOR, the world's largest maker of basketball equipment, is teaming up with some of the Area basketball coaches in the Philippines as part of its global strategy to discover and nurture a new breed of world-class hoopsters.

Spalding has forged a partnership with the Coach E Basketball School managed by local basketball heroes Eric Altamirano and Ramon Mogueson. The official NBA basketball supplier, through its exclusive Philippine distributor Prolino Sports Center, has agreed to subscribe as much as 32 percent of the training fees.

The Spalding-Prolino venture can be availed of at Solino Inc. Gymnasium or each coach-proprietor's (San) pay-for-application Coach E Basketball School's clinic from July 20 to Sept. 11 this year. Coach E holds their sessions at The Zone in Makati and at Chancellor in Libis. Contact 631-1395 or 0917-7562658.

Big Event at Pasay Cockpit

THE GENUINE Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) and Mak-3D present another edition of Sto.Gand-Cocking "Big Event & Cock Derby" on July 31 at the Pasay City Cockpit. Sponsors are Gaspacan Computers, 3666 Aggasan & Gil Fortune Cagayan Mix Inc. "Minimum 300 expect more than 70 first-time exhibitors. All the participants are definitely finishing their one guaranteed in this event," said Fernan Antonio, one of GCAP's stalwarts. The first two editions of the [illegible] and Cock Derby" on Oct. 10, 2004 and [illegible] Octagon drew crowds over 5,000. Antonio added. Meanwhile, the "10th PCC Anniversary & Cock Derby" is set on July 31

INQUIRER

OPINION

In the barracks

THE MILITARY, like nature, abhors a vacuum. In the depths of the current political crisis, we must be careful not to tempt the armed services to leave the barracks and rush into the public square. How do we do that? By examining the crisis within the constitutional process.

It's a million people gathered in Edsa, and that gathering were mirrored in other parts of the country, then Gen. Efren Abu might be commissioned to do in July 2005 what Gen. Angelo Reyes did in January 2001, like that moment of truth for the chief of staff of the Armed Forces is nowhere on the horizon.

Public knowledge of the allegations against President Macapagal-Arroyo, that she instructed an election official to commit election fraud, is broad, public outrage, however, as it is traditionally measured (that is, by people voting with their feet), is much more muted. Street rallies, especially the kind conducted by the tactical alliance of the militant Left and the heirs of Joseph Estrada, remain a non factor.

This makes the political situation even more ambiguous, and the very lack of clarity has emboldened the usual suspects, yet again, to try to provoke specific military units to enter the political fray. Remarkably, in the emergency ceremonial conference he convened on Friday, Abu admitted as much.

"I am aware of the efforts by some persons, some of them former military, to give a new meaning to what is true professionalism. They are busy enticing some of our personnel to cast their souls, their offices, their unblemished records, their careers and their future aspirations, to express a political preference in the realm that belongs to politicians."

Abu did not name names, but the list of ambitious or adventurous former military men attuned enough to indefinite what it means to be a professional soldier is not a long one.

"Let us re-establish the noble tradition of military professionalism by insulating our officers and men from politics. We owe it to the future generations," Abu told the country's most senior military officers.

Abu's remarks, however, caught the media's attention for another reason. By carefully measuring his words, he seemed to be distancing himself from the President at the very same time he renewed his pledge to defend the Commander-in-Chief.

"The call by various parties for the President to resign in view [of] alleged wrongdoing is now undergoing a constitutional process that is legal and within the democratic processes our nation lives," he said. There he added: "We respect the freedom of expression. The soldier has a duty to protect this political exercise. He is not expected to intervene in it."

By committing himself to political neutrality did Abu in fact telegraph a coded withdrawal of support from the President?

That is certainly possible, but not probable. The chief of staff's words are clear enough: "The outcome of these political developments would be the result of the Filipino people's collective will, not the soldier's intervention or some officers' expression of grievances."

His reminder about true professionalism, moreover, is couched in the very language of the code of conduct he evokes: neutral, apolitical, professional.

Not least, he is aware that some of those opposed to his duty to follow an ideological agenda many in the military will find incompatible with democracy. (The AFP's deputy chief, Lt. Gen. Ruben Rafael, also reiterated a key principle. "There is a chain of command. [We will follow] all legitimate orders," he said.)

The concern about the proper interpretation of Abu's possible coded statement, therefore, may be more speculative than solid. But—and this is the point—they are valid nonetheless.

The very idea that the military will be drawn once again in the public square, whether out of misplaced ambition or a sense of patriotic duty should give everyone pause. It is therefore incumbent on the major players in the political crisis to agree on the constitutional mechanism for resolving it. If resignation on the one hand is not an option, and impeachment on the other is unacceptable, then a compromise based on the Constitution must be found.

If only to keep our soldiers in their barracks, the country's bishops may find themselves playing an unlikely role: reminding the political class that politics, after all, is still the art of the possible.

Resignation as a mode of removal

SEPARATE OPINION

Jurgen A. Cruz

THE LAST two days were marked with much political excitement caused by several significant developments. At last President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has decided to fire Cabinet Member Avelino Cruz Jr. from his post as secretary of national defense. Secretary Cruz is known to be a close friend of the President and has been instrumental in the successful campaign of Mrs. Arroyo in the last presidential election. Secretary Cruz is also known to be a very loyal member of the Cabinet. Secretary Cruz has been with the President since the time she was still the vice president. Secretary Cruz is also known to be a very competent member of the Cabinet. He is a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy and has served in the military for many years. He is also a graduate of the Harvard Law School. He is a member of the Philippine Bar. He is a member of the Philippine Bar Association. He is a member of the Philippine Bar Association. He is a member of the Philippine Bar Association

A soldier's dilemma

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

help from our government.

* * *

Why do I mention those things?

The reality is once again lasting one of those periodic crises that our armed forces is going to go through sometime in the future. It is as if we make it a point to mess two steps backward for every step forward. And we wonder why we are left behind by most, if not all, of our neighbors.

In 1986, we decided to devise our support behind Corazon Aquino, abandoning the incumbent Ferdinand Marcos. He never hailed as heroes and dubbed the New Armed Forces of the Philippines (NAFP). After a few years, the country was back to square one with the old elite organizing their own versions of power and influence outside of our institutions and much of the economy.

In 1998, our people elected a movie star to lead the nation. But barely two years after, he was relentlessly in all kinds of scandals and was removed from office by a second People Power movement. The Armed Forces threw its support behind Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, again abandoning the incumbent as it did in 1986. Do both occasions, we did not abide by the Constitution. The fact has been conveniently overlooked by many people.

Today, we are being urged by our superiors to remain neutral and to stay out of politics. Didn't someone say that the football player is left to contend his desire who to throw at on to remain above politics?

Some of my colleagues say that I have a mass complex. Actually, I have more thoughts of myself as some kind of a messiah or savior. I do know that our country is in more trouble before than what our "democratically elected" leaders have been able to deliver so far. We have paid such a high price for being innocent observers of democracy in Asia. Either unwisely the past twenty years have clearly indicated that our democracy has been all for us with little substance.

It is time to bring up the question often asked: "Why does the military intervene in politics?" The noted Harvard scholar, Samuel Huntington, provides the classic reply: "When it sees the civilian politicians as incompetent or corrupt but rather the institutions of the political system." The present setup remains a system which continues to be exploited and manipulated by political forces bent on achieving their selfish goals with little thought to delivering the basic needs of our people and respecting their aspirations. Every new election seems to bring out even more creative forms of abuses initiated instead of answering the people's will. This system must change, but this can only happen if we have a leadership that holds the moral high ground, not one beset by questions of integrity or credibility.

If I see no tradition fighting the enemies of our country and laying my life on the line, I must be accused that there is a bright future. Unfortunately, children. That is the basic problem. So this time, I do not intend to leave things entirely in the hands of politicians who have made a mess of our country. I will not be neutral and I urge my fellow soldiers to make their own decisions. That is the least I believe that we are tired of all these promises, of all their posturings and of all their protestations. And if all they have to offer are belated tokens of reform, for us active serve like extended citizens of this nation in their long term objectives for our country, especially which will mean ending people, especially the poor and the powerless.

* * *

Comments to: ramonfarolan@yahoo.com

Athletics in academe

FOR many people, particularly the alumni of elite schools, the school year does not begin in June. It begins in July with the basketball tournament of the UAAP (University Athletic Association of the Philippines) basketball tournament.

The heightened interest in collegiate sports in the Philippines may trigger alarm bells for those concerned about the increased intrusion of commercialism into the academe.

Derek Bok, former dean of the Harvard Law School and subsequently president of Harvard University, warns in a recent book ("Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education," Princeton University Press, 2003) that "athletics . . . are the oldest bastion of commercialization in American higher education."

Bok traces back this development to 1852, when Yale and Harvard rowing crews raced against each other to Lake Winnipesaukee. The event marked the first intercollegiate sports contest in the United States. It was made possible through the sponsorship of an enterprising railroad owner and real estate developer who wanted to promote his New Hampshire property. He included in the participation of his athletic crews by offering them complimentary lot expenses, "lavish prizes," and "unlimited alcohol."

By the end of the 19th century, professional football coaches and athletic scholars were in American schools. The intercollegiate athletes supported free contracts. Teams dressed up "the bonfire's boy, the iron molder, the boiler maker, or even a brawny blacksmith" and called it a day. Professionalism and athletic prowess. The conduct of the game was equally unrestrained. The 1906 season counted 25 casualties, prompting President Theodore Roosevelt to summon college presidents to the White House to consider how to control the carnage. The meeting paved the way for the creation of the National Collegiate Athletic Association in 1906. It was mandated to develop rules for the protection of collegiate sports.

The NCAA succeeded in controlling violence in collegiate sports. But its efforts to other areas, Bok queries the judgment rendered in 1995 by Walter Byers, recognized as the principal architect of the modern NCAA, which he served as executive director for 38 years: "I College athletics reform movements spanning almost 90 years have been remarkably consistent. They never reformed much of anything."

The reformers failed to see that maintaining the amateur ideal of academics over athletics in US colleges and universities. The **importance attached to sports had provided athletes with benefits (such as athletic scholarships), and privileges (in the choice of class schedules, for instance), not accessible to ordinary students.** But the time demanded by athletics ran down the time for academics.

A number of observations aroused to the breakdown of the accepted proper balance: enrollment of athletes who had not achieved the academic standards required for admission into the school; emergence of "jock" courses for athletes who could not cope with the requirements of the established programs of study; de facto exemption of athletes from attendance and performance standards expected of students; low graduation rates of athletes (among the top Division 1-A colleges, only 24 percent of basketball players and 48 percent of football players received degrees within six years period in the 1990s).

A study of the economics of athletic programs suggests that in more than 85 to 20 universities there is profit from athletic programs. But the promise of big bucks continues to drive the universities to invest in football and basketball. The money comes from ticket sales, corporate sponsorship and media contracts.

In the UAAP's case, although proceeds from television contracts have been increasing, they do not cover the investments made on athletic programs. But the passion to win has been cultivated to produce the same kind of cash business associations in the academe. Bok observes: "Many of the measures suggested to give American student athletes a chance to obtain an academic degree may well hurt the UAAP as well.

The first step would be to track the academic performances of student athletes to get a sense of the scale of the problem, as well as to monitor how effectively a school addresses their learning difficulties.

Since schools tend to accept student athletes despite weak academic preparation for college, Bok argues for postponing their involvement in competitive sports until their second year. This will give them a chance to get started on their studies without the distraction of the games.

Restricting games to the weekends will help athletes to avoid missing their classes. Assisting athletes that they are major their academic programs by means of tutors, counseling as they maintain satisfactory grades, will help protect them from unreasonable demands of the coaching staff.

Controlling the training was for maintaining athletes as a more difficult challenge, in the United States has experienced. More than half of the Division 1A universities recruited assistants in the 1990s for scholars of rules designed to control the time that athletes spend in sports. The final athletes in the high-profile sports of football and basketball go to college to prepare for a professional career, not to get an education. From another point of view, putting a cap on the financial subsidies they can get from the schools may amount to establishing a cartel "to exploit athletes by preventing them from being compensated at the full value of their services."

In the end, university authorities must consider whether collegiate sports achieve the objectives for which they were established and promote the values proclaimed by their institutions. A Carnegie Foundation report concluded in 1929 that "at no point in the educational process has commercialism in college athletics wrought more mischief than in modern sport's emphasis on intercollegiate competition." In 1989, the Carnegie Foundation for Teaching reached the same conclusion: "Our cynicism that stems from the abuses in [intercollegiate] athletics reduces the net of student life, best promoting academic dishonesty to the loss of individual ideals." If students learn dishonestly in school, should we be surprised if they later behave dishonestly as businessmen or businesswomen, professionals or politicians?

I enjoy watching NCAA and UAAP games. I dearly hope they will continue to prosper. But collegiate sports exist as many concerns in the Philippines as they do in the United States. These concerns deserve the attention not only of the NCAA and UAAP boards but also of the university presidents and their trustees.

Editorial@inquirer.com.ph

Going for the 'Big Time'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

GETTING the big time, that's the Filipino dream. Winning in lotto. Scoring at the horse races. Merrying a rich husband. Getting away with a major crime. Winning at an election.

The big time. The easy score. That's the stuff our dreams are made of. Not for us the Chinese way—living above the mute, keeping on a tropical, tedious, routine, and relatively harsh existence, and slowly but steadily building up capital to create a fortune. Instead, we're constantly on the look-out for the jackpot, the winning ticket that will hand us one of our hard-luck lives and make the big time. Preferably without having to work for it, because that's impossible to endure. Because winning the lottery drew to the little people's daily ordeal to the big time, or the pesky big time.

Tammy Filomeno Hindelang and Jesse Nite Gonzalez, the two contestants for whom we pledged all their lives to the show their stories. They're taken odd jobs, worked to all sorts of fast food joints, and Tammy has even taken a caregiver's course in hopes of getting a job to the States. But mostly, they've been praying that their luck would change. Tammy's boyfriend, Jesse, has been working with sleeping capsules from the school canteen, they've mapped out contingency schemes to make quick and easy money, including holding up convenience stores. But they could get caught. Choo-choo.

That's the mindset of the Filipino poor. Dream on—in the desire to pull off one big caper by kidnapping Melody Librante Miller, the mom beautiful boosted by dreams of show biz big time—then find themselves enthralled to the family tree bit of Jesse's mother, Lourdes Nite Gonzalez, and his uncle Jun Wilson. Uncle Wilson? That's when our intrepid pair find out the price they have to pay for dreaming of the big Time.

"BIG TIME" is one of the Beatitudes in the Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival, a competition for first-time filmmakers sponsored by the Cultural Center of the Philippines and Ayala Foundation Corporation.

Its purpose is to encourage the development of the independent digital film market, a local counterpart of the Sundance Film Festival. Cinemalaya provides grants to chosen filmmakers to turn their screenplays into features. "Big Time" is one of only three finalists out of 40 entries given. Even more impressive is that Adoofilms, the production outfit behind "Big Time," is also behind "Mangatyan," one of six finalists (out of hundreds of submissions) in the Cinemalaya short film competition.

For purposes of full disclosure, let me say at the outset that one of the writers-editors and producers of "Big Time" is a niece who has otherwise to go by the "screen name" Monique Quesada.

But even without the familial connection, viewers should find "Big Time" quite a romp. "Be sure to laugh out loud," "Monique" jokingly pleaded as the film unfolded during the press preview. But didn't have to. The film's hilarious script, solid direction and crisp editing provide enough reasons to laugh out loud, and a distinguishing marker, young, (semper), smart filmmakers are providing hope and much-needed respite. Congratulations to CCP and Dream Broadcasting for opening the door to a new generation of filmmakers and for their bravery in taking risks.

Their risks could have been rewarded by more than just critical acclaim, but awards and government support. Although these should be lauded, too, but let's be honest and acknowledge that filmmaking is a way of telling stories, audacity and chutzpah.

There are also the qualities that precisely define issue-and-Tammy, who name criminal ambitions but unfortunately possess talents enough to do their attempts to commit the crime. But like a pair of drivers who, before starting a heist, hold hands and pray to the Lord that "this is all for you." So very Filipino!

"BIG TIME" is "Big Time"! Sumble pressure to reveals itself time and again. Some shots are so blurry one hopes that's the way the director wanted them to be. But on the whole, it's lighting is very good.

Surrounded by a cast of telebovela and stage actors, the leaned professionals starrie by their inexperienced. Michael de Mesa is excellent as always, conveying menace just by a curtly glance and a slight pout. As the gangster Mamoks in a cameo, Ricky Davao is terrifying. Jaclyn Jose doesn't just look battered by dad's looks, but also his acts of choice underwear. Jamie Wilson, as the outspoken writer seeking to make his own way in the underworld, convincingly conveys both desperation and cool ostensibly. Even Monica Miguel lets moments indeed a surprise appearance, which one something about how talented the filmmakers were.

But in a way, the dogtrack turned an about the movie only adds to the fun, drawing in the audience in the world of the characters. Tammy and Jesse's mind aspirations, courting empathy with the pain of protagonists whom we can't help but like and cheer on. Even when murder and mayhem intrude upon the proceedings, we aren't quite sure whether we want Jesse's daughter for long, as a joke might be in the offing.

* * *

THE CINEMALAYA Festival, showcasing the 10 entries in the short film and full-length feature categories, is underway at the CCP complex. "Big Time" will have its premiere on Saturday, July 16 on the Little Theater.

It's amazing that even as major producers and the film industry as a whole are caught in the doldrums, producing as many as 100 films a year and a dwindling market, young, (semper), smart filmmakers are providing hope and much-needed respite. Congratulations to CCP and Dream Broadcasting for opening the door to a new generation of filmmakers and for their bravery in taking risks. Because of the steps suggested to give American student athletes a chance to obtain an academic degree may well hurt the UAAP as well.

The first step would be to track the academic performances of student athletes to get a sense of the scale of the problem, as well as to monitor how effectively a school addresses their learning difficulties.

Since schools tend to accept student athletes despite weak academic preparation for college, Bok argues for postponing their involvement in competitive sports until their second year. This will give them a chance to get started on their studies without the distraction of the games.

Restricting games to the weekends will help athletes to avoid missing their classes. Assisting athletes that they are major their academic programs by means of tutors, counseling as they maintain satisfactory grades, will help protect them from unreasonable demands of the coaching staff.

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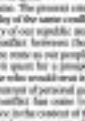
Beyond Gloria



PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

GLORIA Macapagal-Arroyo has set back the political growth of our country by at least 20 years as a result of her single-minded pursuit of personal power. She has re-injected into our historic governance a model of rule that perpetuates the grave vices many poorer. Like a small-town politician who has mastered the rhythms of the patron-client system, she has brought the personal loyalty of law enforcers, the acquiescence of legislators, the allegiance of bad men, and the silence of civil society. In this way, good government conscience is left an expensive abstract concept like no other president has since Marcos.

It is easy to think this is all the result of a bad flaw in character. But that would be a simplistic view. The truth is that the Arroyo is very much a child of political culture that has been allowed, at the time of her father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal. It is clear to us now that she has known no other form of politics, and no other way of running a government.

In 1972, ferdinand Marcos tried to break the stranglehold of the political culture controlled by the old elite by using martial law as the instrument to do so. But he failed martial law as a device to modernize, a revolution from the center that would resolve the contradictions of a feudalistic social order. He abolished the political parties of the traditional classes, shut down Congress and the media which he used to criticize him

TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to
[illegible]@inquirer.com.ph

Edited by Juan F. Santamaria Jr.

How long can GMA stay in power?

GLORIA Macapagal-Arroyo's stay in office has become tenuous, with middle forces, big business and Cory Aquino joining the opposition, militant groups and retired military officers in calling on the President to resign.

Her key economic managers and a major partner of the ruling coalition have also abandoned Ms Arroyo, who is accused of rigging the presidential election last year. The Liberal Party led by Senate President Franklin Drilon has withdrawn support from Ms Arroyo and is asking her to step down.

Any statement from the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines questioning her moral authority to govern will further erode her base of support and can hasten her downfall.

A major institution that has yet to earn its fault on Ms Arroyo is the military.

Ms Arroyo has maintained an intransigent position. Buoyed by support from mayors, governors and administration legislators, she has declared that she is not leaving. Malacañang anytime soon.

But a prolonged stalemate is not good for the country. It will encourage more street protests, plummet the stock market, weaken the peso and frighten foreign investors.

As in Edsa I and Edsa II, the military and the Church will play a big role in breaking the stalemate.

End games

By Edwin de la Torre

How long will GMA stay in office, after the defection of those who led the Cabinet in urging "If we LOVE together"?

Some friends in civil society circles acidly thought that GMA would yield after the series of endorsement calls by her top appointees. It was not just the heavyweight economic team that called on her to resign. The Makati Business Club followed, which in Edsa II civil society contemporaries. There the Edsa I icons Jaime Cardinal Sin, Fidel Ramos, Corazon Aquino, Juan Ponce Enrile, subsuming resignation to the Constitutional way, compared with impeachment.

After Cory Aquino, President Fidel Ramos (Drilon could not be far behind. Only Cardinal Sin was missing from the round one of leading players. And his collegial successor in the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) arrived "discerning."

Boardroom power play

I can sympathize with the feeling of frustrated expressed by Edsa loyalists. Their sudden awakening of an accumulated "Cabinet coup" seemed shortchanged, initially. But as the stories unfolded, a simple sense of values surfaced events.

Why was there so much protestation by Cory and the Edsa II circles against people power as a means to get GMA out? Because they were planning a simple boardroom-style power play, which is constitutional, of course. And a very encouraged change. People power is more difficult to manage, powerfully messy.

Except that GMA refused to cooperate with their script for the end game. So, it's time for planning other means of departure.

Opportunists

As the Egyptian sa Italo, a reporter from the Palace beat observed that a win PVR (former president Fidel V. Ramos) who has held peace conferences in Mindanao, rather than GMA. Love him or hate him, the man's years of political sensing is "opportunistic" in the technical sense.

He has the cues and game. Let GMA call the Cha-cha (charter change) and hold regular elections in 2010, effectively decimating her ratio. If PVR runs in his district in Pangasinan, and his cronies picture matches, then is destiny. There is no fallback version. She goes on leave (does not resign to restore her immunity from suit), and lets Noli de Castro preside over the transition.

Except GMA has the top to refused to cooperate. So it's time for planning other means of departure.

Opposition's wish

What about the opposition's "wish list party" and game? There is a consensus, and pathway to GMA resignation, (followed by a Noli de Castro presidency). But those who want a faster resolution and who place a premium on constitutionality, this is the most likely end game. It is similar to the "if we hold on together" version although she faces four very unlikely—Defense Sec Gilbert Teodoro is not Executive Secretary.

Can the elite opposition live with that? "Only a heavy heart," says one unitary, "but he should consider any proposal to front to ensure the transition is fully functional, and that there was a need for chairperson.

Last Friday, however, many opposition in CAT already decided the President should resign (unstructured). Others who had formerly been in power in chorus and the whole track to come out. Ms Arroyo declared on Thursday night that she had already told the truth in her "letter to judgment" to resign, and that she was not interested in forming a truth commission.

Furthermore, the resignations of the television-minded members of the Cabinet showed that even they, who have worked closely with the President, have given up on any chance for the President to pre-greater television over her personal and political interests.

Desperate moves

The courageous and selfless moves of the former Cabinet secretaries is in such contrast to the desperate moves of the President to remain in power—including her resurgence of the ex-secretary removable resignations and her allies' attacks on their motives and integrity. Sadly for her, people know that the former Cabinet secretaries are men and women of credibility, competence and integrity, who have served the country faithfully both inside and outside government.

Will she last to President? She will certainly not last until 2013. Before the events last Friday, many already thought that the best scenario for her (but for the country) was that she would last shortly until after the 2007 elections.

Exit formula

At the outset, her unpopularity would probably be weakened into an opposition-dominated Congress, and she would then be impeached. However, after 10 before Cabinet secretaries, many business groups, NGOs, people's organizations and other associations, and even former President Cory Aquino added their voices to the calls for Ms Arroyo's resignation, the President would be lucky if she lasts more than a few months.

It would now seem that the President is heading on what appears to be the "peaceful EDSA two formula" of former Presidents Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada: Constituent assembly ironing out this year, new Constitution with a parliamentary system, and new elections by mid-2010.

Why was there so much protestation by Cory and the Edsa II circles against people power as a means to get GMA out? Because they were planning a simple boardroom-style power play

And the ground should include some from the opposition." They will [illegible] Ramos, personality, the business to solicit his proposals not the same as PVR's idea of a High Commission.

There is another end game, which is more constitutional. The longer GMA leaves, popular power can build up and down in middle class and other columnist in my opinion, which is very inconvenient but not unconstitutional, to St. Joseph's house' line dismissal. Anyone who insists it can stick GMA will have to step down with her. A coalition of people power and opposition leaders will set up a caretaker government to govern in the transition even while local reforms. Overseas change and regular elections.

Extra-constitutional

Given the intransigence of GMA and her loyalists, the extra-constitutional end game will probably need the persuasive power of the military. Will it be like the Edsa I formula of withdrawal of support by the chain of command? Will it be like the Edsa I formula of open defiance by a group of officers and their units, which eventually gains support from larger sections of the military? Is it somewhere in between? Is it a case of "we gamot" being played in the minds and hearts of military and constitutional reform should be done by a constitutional convention that is not clouded by personal and partisan political interests. CAT stands for constitutional and structural reforms in our times. We support the constitutional process of convention.

Impartial commission

We also will call for the establishment of an impartial and credible fact-finding commission that will look into the whole truth behind the alleged 2004 electoral fraud, with the aim of bringing all those involved before the bar of justice and recommending much-needed reforms in the system.

What to hope for the country? Mr interventions immediately, but [illegible] forum: the independent fact-finding commission, the Commission on Elections clear and nonpartisan, Congress and the Comelec to investigate, and the long-needed social and political reforms—so people or greedy drivers are rigorously institutionalized.

Truth, justice and reforms. These are the lasting solutions we want.

(Edwin de la Torre is the executive director of Center for Development Management (CDM-NGO) and a member of Citizens for Truth (CFT).)

She should not, will not last long

By Sixto C. Macasaet

With the Cabinet for Truth (CAT) had proposed the formation of a truth commission as an independent fact-finding commission to establish the truth and settle conflicting allegations. Our basic premise was—let us determine the facts and the truth first, then resolve justice, and let the whole process be conducted neutral, political and economic considerations.

CAT is made up of civil society organizations (non-government organizations, people's organizations and professional, business groups and religious organizations) coming from different parts of the country including the Bishop-Business Conference for Human Development, Caucus of Development NGO Networks, Bantayan ng Pilipinas, Local Government Citizens Networks, Makati Business Club, Municipal Peace Coordinators, Paghahanggad Pilipinas, Women's Action Network for Development and many other organizations.

Most people, including many within CAT, had already concluded that President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was involved in electoral fraud. But we were holding back from calling on her to resign because we also recognized that she faces no, it's time for a process, starting with the much-vaunted CBCP statement.

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It would now seem that the President is heading on what appears to be the "peaceful EDSA two formula" of former Presidents Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada: Constituent assembly ironing out this year, new Constitution with a parliamentary system, and new elections by mid-2010.

If the does not resign soon, the options is to go through the impeachment process. The Liberal Party has already said that it would support the impeachment of Ms Arroyo if she does not resign.

Turncoat

What is better for the country? It is clear that the political turmoil and the divisions will continue and intensify as long as Ms Arroyo remains in power. If she resigns soon—as soon as even by a few more months, say shortly moving someone will shift and dive, and the delivery of basic services by government will suffer. In case, the country feels, the worst has yet to.

The President has charged the loss of constitutional reform to foster the many groups advocating various constitutional reforms to support her.

While many groups within CAT support the shift to a federal and a parliamentary government as one of the lasting solutions to our problems, we also believe that constitutional reform is not being used only as [illegible] the Presidency's stay in Malacañang.

We believe the President no longer has the moral authority to lead even the reform of our Constitution. The clamor is huge now. After she goes, the constitutional reform should be done by a constitutional convention that is not clouded by personal and partisan political interests. CAT stands for constitutional and structural reforms in our times. We support the constitutional process of convention.

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We also will call for the establishment of an impartial and credible fact-finding commission that will look into the whole truth behind the alleged 2004 electoral fraud, with the aim of bringing all those involved before the bar of justice and recommending much-needed reforms in the system.

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INQUIRER Mindanao

Editor Jim Bandigan
Bureau Chief Nina S. Alconaba

Death of a journalist and public servant

By Aquilino Z. Zosa
Polomolok, South Cotabato

MANY radio listeners train the soft, yet commanding, baritone of Rolando Morales every Sunday afternoon.

Morales, 45, had just finished his regular hour-long program over DMD radio station in Polomolok, South Cotabato and was riding on his motorcycle along the national highway when he was shot and killed by a gang of motorcyclists on July 3.

He is the 95th journalist to have been killed since democracy was restored in the Philippines in 1986, according to the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines.

His death has sparked debate among journalists. Was he really a journalist?

To some, particularly for colleagues at dxMD Radio Agong in front of Sarime City, he was. Others refused to give him that recognition.

To be it. No one from among the members of his family is asking for it. It's nothing dead for them.

In fact, his daughter, Ma. Jane Morales, was sounding off why there were getting such kind of media attention. She herself is not sure that her father was a journalist. "He was a simple family. I'm wondering why we get such media attention," she said.

Block timer

For nearly a year, Morales had been hosting the "Tinig ng Bayanan" program, aired every Sunday, 4-5 p.m., over DMD, a local AM station of Radio Mindanao Network. Before signing, he was a block timer, according to Jane Morales, program director of Radyo Agong.

"Tinig ng Bayanan is the station's program. He (Morales) was not paying for it," Bayani said.

Bayani said Morales was killed because of his fiery commentaries and advocacy against illegal drug trafficking.

The program director recalled that a few months ago, he got hold of a letter warning Morales to stop his tirades or commentaries against local officials and the proliferation of illegal drugs in Polomolok.

Bayani claimed that he even read in his nightly public affairs program, titled "Kalso-Balso" the letter sent to Morales.

The victim's wife Flores said her husband had never been involved in any trouble. "I didn't know he had enemies," she said.

Aside from a good voice, Rolando had an analytical mind. He talked intelligibly.

Flores had asked him to stop his tirades, but he did not listen. He would always say: "Pat is my humble contribution to public service."

Several times before he was assassinated, Flores had observed suspicious-looking persons passing by their house in Sandawa subdivision. She tried to live with it and prepared herself to accept whatever would happen.

At last, Flores could hardly understand why her husband loved to speak even without getting paid for it.

"I didn't understand why he was involved with liberal (banning) Ariel Casilao. Didi Pascal or he is a radio commentator whom he usually getting positive ID," she said.

Studying as he was finally called, served the media and Rotel with not receiving anything in return. It could be their passion and a deep sense of volunteerism that drove him to go on despite the death threats.

Volunteer

Morales was a regular employee of the pineapple giant Dole Philippines (Dolefil).

His family lives in a middle-class subdivision. Morales earned an average of P12,000 for a 15-day work at Dolefil inspector. Flores earns almost the same amount.

All their six children went to the same multi-lateral company.

Dolefil management refused to intervene of Rotel to help maintain peace and order in Barangay Poblacion of Polomolok. At night, he joined other Rotel volunteers in ensuring the safety and security of their village. He worked with Rotel from 2 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Flores realized his invaluable contribution to the community and the media profession only after he passed away.

"Because of Rotel, we plan it peaceful. You don't see salmon running the streets at night," she said.

Just like her slain husband, Flores displayed exemplary courage. She appeared calm when she faced media members for an interview the day after her husband was killed.

She admitted that Rolando's death left a void in the lives of her children. "We are devastating. But you what to be wanted. I'd love reminding him to stop with his controversy program, but he did not listen."

All she asked for is speedy justice.

Davao journalists learn gun handling, safety

By Germelina A. Lacorte
Sterling, Hagonoy, Davao del Sur

I SMALL, exhale, fire!" This was the instruction given the journalists when they began a gun shooting exercise at the newly opened Sensyall firing range here recently.

Not relax, don't be shy on and to learn how to fire a gun," Emory Ami, exec. director of the Philippine Practical Shooting Association in Southern Mindanao, told the 20 journalists from Davao City and other areas.

The gun handling activity, including a brief orientation on the country's firearms law, safety in handling a gun and an actual shooting exercise where journalists were allowed to fire six rounds of bullets at the firing range.

Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza, who sponsored the shoot-fest, came the firing range.

Arellano said since the media participants completed the gun handling and safety briefing, they would be issued a gun safety certificate from Camp Crame, which they could use to acquire their own guns.

"Every thing is for free, as long as the media help in publicity," he said.

The training took place in officials of the New York-based Committee for the Protection of Journalists (CPJ) and the South East Asia Press Alliance (SEAPA) were in the city to coordinate on recent attacks on journalists.

Abi Wright, CPJ Asia coordinator, and Roby Alampay, executive director of the SEAPA, met with journalists and families of the victims.

They said they were surprised by the huge clearance on the Davao City checkpoint that greeted them at the airport.

But Duterte defended the event saying it was not a call to arms.

Duterte, former mayor of the local daily The Mindanao Times before he joined politics, said the training aimed to give more role gun handling to the media.

If incidences decided to use firearms, "It's a matter of personal choice," he said.

"The move to arm journalists against Davao attacks is clear not to protect journalists but to protect the gun lawless city," Alampay said.

Councilor Evardone, SEAP Southeast Mindanao chair, said Duterte's intention was good.

However, allowing journalists to arm themselves exposes them to danger instead," he said.

Evardone said instead of adopting arm-to-arm solutions, the government should speed up the resolution of numerous killings happening in the country, including those of two media.

For Mindanao by-columnist Gary Pacot to of Bombo Radyo, who survived seven attempts on his life, it was important to learn how to shoot.

He said a gun would help ward off potential threats to his life. With a report from Joselle A. Badilla

PHILIPPINE PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

21st Post-Graduate Course and 16th Midyear Convention

EDSA Shangri-La Hotel, 20-22 July 2005

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20 July 2005 (Wednesday)
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Across the NATION

Issues at your fingertips

Assistant Editor Tony Burgonio

Mining firm sued for discrimination vs tribal kids

BAGUIO CITY—Parents of indigenous Filipino pupils, who were barred from enrolling at a school administered by the Philex Mining Corp. in Tuba, Benguet, sued the mining firm for discrimination at the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples.

Twenty-one parents asked the NCIP to investigate instances of supposed evidence that the firm allowed only one group of indigenous Filipino children to enroll the school year at Philex-subsidized elementary and high schools, at the expense of children from Ifugao, Mt. Province and Cagayan.

Atty Angelica Ismino-Ocenar, an NCIP lawyer, said the children were in school belong to a group of indigenous peoples (IPs), whose ancestry has yet to be established.

Doctor said the NCIP would file the complaint with the Benguet Prosecutor's Office because the charges make Philex criminally liable under the provisions of the Republic Act 8371 (Indigenous Peoples Rights Act) and Republic Act 7610 (the anti-child abuse law).

The NCIP has cited section 21 of Ipra, which is an "equal protection clause" against discrimination, and which covers all schools. Section 72 of the anti-child abuse law also carries must be prosecuted for children against discrimination, according to the agency.

Philex officials have declined to comment until they receive a copy of the complaint.

But Redempta Bahada, Philex spokesperson, said the firm decided to reduce the enrollment of the Philex Mines Elementary School (PMES) and the Saint Louis High School (SLHS) to the dependents of active mine employees and Tuba residents because of the high maintenance cost.

These schools are operated by the Baguio Catholic vicariate although Philex subsidizes both schools annually with a P24 million budget, according to Bahada. The firm also spends P5 million monthly to pay for the schools' electricity bills.

The firm is also handing on a 2004 agreement with the parents that gave the former employees until the end of the previous school year to transfer their children and dependents to new schools.

Philex is undertaking a downsizing and phaseout plan for its personnel shutdown in 2013. The gradual relinquishment of the schools and the eviction of former employees from the mine camp are part of this plan. Ishmael Galvezan, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

PLANTING SEASON
Farmers of Candon City, Ilocos Sur start planting palay as the rainy season starts.

Visayas, Bicol govs draw up plans to set up 'republics'

FED UP with always having to be dictated by "Imperial Manila," the governors of Western, Central and Eastern Visayas have started plans to form a separate "Visayas republic" in case President Macapagal-Arroyo is forcibly removed from office.

Governors from Mindanao and the Bicol region have also started thinking of their own republics.

Oriental Negros Gov. George Arnaiz, who is also chair of the Central Visayas Regional Development Council, said the idea of forming a federal Visayas republic came out spontaneously during a meeting of governors in Manila last Wednesday at the Century Park Hotel, borne out of their "frustration" over how events in Metro Manila are affecting the rest of the country.

Believing that the people power uprisings of 1986 and 1991, Arnaiz said "we are always dictated upon by Manila, even if there are only a few rallies."

Arnaiz said the sentiment was shared by his fellow Visayan governors, as rallies demanding the ouster of President Arroyo were again seen in Metro Manila.

"We have been removing presidents since the time of [President] Manuel Roxas if they themselves cannot respect the Constitution, how can we expect it?"

Arnaiz said four of the Visayas governors, only Aklan Governor Gov. Banl Dana did not sign the manifesto supporting a "federal Visayas republic" because the first parties was in support of President Arroyo. Dana, however, favors the idea of having a federal republic, Arnaiz said.

"We have everything in the Visayas except the Armed forces, and a few airplanes. But we are not really preparing for external aggression. We only need to fight local criminality," Arnaiz said.

He said while it will initially be difficult for the Visayas provinces to stand on its own, the bulk of the income for this "republic" would be its collections from international ports like Cebu.

"Soon, we will have an international port in Iloilo and Bacolod. We should also start paying the right taxes," he said.

The idea has gained the support of local executives down to the municipal level, Arnaiz said.

This movement will be similar but separate from the federal movement that is also being planned by Mindanao governors, Arnaiz added.

On Tuesday, the governors and some mayors of the Visayas will meet in Cebu to discuss the issue further. The meeting, to be hosted by Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia, will be held simultaneously with a similar meeting in Davao among Mindanao governors and mayors.

"We will meet in order to understand better what this movement is all about in case we don't follow our Constitution," Arnaiz said.

Bicol Legaspi City Vice Mayor Joey Salazar said there was no need for a semi-republic in the country or in the province. "We still are survive as a nation. It will only divide us even more," he said.

In Surigaodel City, the move to create a Mindanao Republic would only worsen the decades-old conflict on the island, according to South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Fuentes.

The establishment of an Independent Mindanao was being peddled by Zosa Bangke Abadianas, a group headed by former Transportation Secretary Panas Jesus Alvarez.

Alvarez's group even came up with a flag for the proposed republic, with a octagonal coloured by eight suns, and it "increased aesthetics."

Alvarez said his group has been gaining support with the process that have been rocking the capital.

Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte said he would support the creation of a separate government for Mindanao if the Arroyo was ousted through violent means. Duterte is the Arroyo's unitarian adviser. Also Li Nal, PDI Visayas Bureau chief; Alexander B. and Leo Martin G. Gamara, PDI South-ern Luzon Bureau; Avelino Gutierrez, Anthony L. Alfanta, Pe-dinand D. Zaragoza and Ker melina A. Lacorda, PDI Mindanao Bureau

DUTERTE

ENRILE

ARNAIZ

Comelec exec found guilty of poll fraud

TARLAC CITY—A judge here has found an election officer in Gerona town guilty of electoral fraud during the 2001 elections and sentenced him to a year in prison.

In a six-page decision on Thursday, Judge Ananias Arbitario of the regional trial court here also ordered Gerardo Gonzales, former election registrar of Gerona, to pay Interior Region Linda Flor complainant, P150,000 in damages.

Lana, a candidate for a seat in the Gerona council in 2001, said Gonzales and nine others for tampering with the statement of votes covering four precincts in the town. The tampering, Lana said, resulted in the increase in the number of votes of her rival, Manuel Mella.

Mella was initially declared the winner but was eventually replaced by Lana, who filed the case before the Commission on Elections.

The court, however, acquitted Gonzales co-accused—municipal treasurer Santiago Mina Jr., municipal treasurer Josie Mina, municipal registrar Teodoro Cabanos, Barangay Electoral Inspector field officer Sofia Dalan, and school principals Engelbert Agustin Valentin Tadeller, Elmaya Barangay. Isaias Lorenzo and Jose Santiago.

Arbitario said it was "difficult to pinpoint who made the alterations on the statements of votes [in favor of Mella]. Nobody saw who did it. Not one of the accused ... would admit making OC."

The court, he said, therefore had to "resort to elimination process." He said no one but Gonzales could have "made the alterations.

Russell Arnaiz, PDI Central Luzon Bureau

PMA cadets allowed to watch news but to maintain silence

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—Philippine Military Academy officials did not keep the crisis affecting President Macapagal-Arroyo from cadets, who watched the President apologize for her "lapse in judgment" when she talked to an election official last year.

But Lt. Gen. Cesarino Balmeteg, PMA superintendent, said he asked the cadets to "keep their feelings to themselves," to comply with the instructions of Armed forces chief of staff Gen. Edilberto Adu.

Balmeteg said he read Adu's message on Friday to PMA employees, advising them to refrain from discussing the issue.

Adu assigned up the presence in case her from office.

He said the PMA remains on line alert.

On Saturday, the PMA gave Lt. Gen. Allan Cabahug-ston, Armed Forces commander for the National Capital Region, public lecture when he received the PMA achievement award.

Balmeteg said the PMA allows its cadets access to all information to "help them prepare for the real world."

Both Balmeteg and his predecessor, AFP deputy chief of staff Lt. Gen. Ildefonso Adan, instituted a process of interaction between instructors and cadets to confer feedback.

There are part of the reforms PMA undertook following a stakeholders' summit in 2000 to help discourage military adventures.

In July 2000, PMA had to address the impact of the failed Oakwood mutiny that was led by PMA graduates.

"[Cadets] have access to the internet. They are required to read newspapers everyday. When you are a cadet, you have to read at least the headline, the editorial news, the comics section, the sports section. [These sections become] part of the general knowledge," Balmeteg said. Vincent Gallenzo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

AV

Eagles open title defense

AVEGO de Manila Junior varsity opens defense of its Intercollegiate Baptist Conference (ICBC) basketball title today with the opening of the Mills (ICBC) youth basketball competition at the Manila College-Alabang. Tomorrow, Pastor Mendoza of the Sto. Lucas Realtors will be guest of honors during the first opening ceremony set at 7:30 a.m. Mendoza, a BEED Centex graduate who starred his senior as con MIP player and member of the MPBL team which won the first MCR Passerelle crown, will give an inspirational talk and make the ceremonial toss.

Fisherama airs today

MANILA BAY television features, this afternoon, an exciting 16 rounds in the featherweight division grilling Rizal Municipal JP Dolores. The bout was held recently at the Cuyo Lapu Sports Complex in Cebu in a fight card promoted by Mateo Salud and it is shown worldwide through The Filipino Channel Pinoy Central TV. Tuesday's telecasts, supported by Fisherama, PCSO and Bayanihan airs at 4 p.m., Duelayan on UHF 9. Soft Power Plus, featuring the elimination round of Ion Candela Sports Collegiate Basketball Conference, airs at 3 p.m.

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GRAB YOUR HANKIES, GIVE YOURSELF A GOOD CRY

"Take My Heart Back"

It'll be alright, you said, tonight
Don't you cry.
Don't you shed a tear.
When you wake up, I will still be here.
When you wake up, we'll battle all your fears.
And now I'll take my heart back,
Leave your pictures on the floor.
Steal back my memory,
I can't take it anymore.
I've cried my eyes out,
Oh, and now I face the years
The way you love me,
vanished all the tears.
Just a little more time was all we needed
Just a little time for me to see.
Oh, the lights that life can give you
Oh, how we get such fire.

So now I'll take my heart back,
Leave your pictures on the floor.
Steal back my memory,
I can't take it anymore.
I've cried my eyes out,
Oh, and now I face the years.
The way you love me,
vanished all the tears.
Na-la-la-la. Na-la-la-la
La-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la
Oh-oh, ohh-ohh

Music, Song and Composed By:
Jennifer Love Hewitt

Jennifer Love Hewitt
Paul Nicholls

If Only

What if the life gives you a second chance...
to love the one you lost?

OPENS JULY 20!

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE ROCK AND ARMAGEDDON

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4 FANTASTIC FOUR

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PG-13

2ND WEEK!

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WAR OF THE WORLDS

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THE DISTAFF SIDE of the opposition, former Sen. Loren Legarda and Rep. Imee Marcos, hold their own at a press forum in Quezon City on Saturday (JOAN BONOCAN)

Low-key archbishop of Jaro is CBCP head

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE COUNTRY'S Roman Catholic bishops yesterday chose a low-key, soft-spoken prelate to steer the Church through a time of political upheaval.

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo of Jaro, Iloilo was elected president of the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines during its 91st plenary meeting in Manila. He was previously CBCP vice president.

Lagdameo, 66, took over the reins from Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla at a time when bishops were not so divided—if not indecisive—over demands for President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation.

The election came at a time when the country's 86 Catholic Catholics needed guidance from the Church's 120 bishops.

Church voice

Insiders agree that the CBCP would "get back its voice" with Lagdameo at the helm.

Bishops had been largely silent as a collective body throughout much the two-year term of Capalla, who had been perceived to be close to the beleaguered Ms Arroyo.

Lagdameo seems like a leader that reflects using images.

One official described Lagdameo as "progressive who is not afraid to institute reforms when needed."

But one priest also called him an "old school and a conservative" in the sense that he was not like the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, who was never afraid to speak out quickly on issues of immense importance.

Sin, who died last month, was also a bishop of Jaro.

Cracking the whip

"We're not afraid to speak his mind and he's not held back," said the official, referring to Lagdameo's reformist style.

Lagdameo was among the few bishops who have publicly spoken out on the controversy surrounding Ms Arroyo's alleged involvement in election fraud, calling on the faithful to pray that she "may be open to the true side, both of her credibility."

But he also called on his Jaro flock to "strongly reject the path of violence and revolutions" in resolving the crisis.

"We do not see right a wrong with another wrong," he said.

Heart for farmers, workers

Lagdameo was also at the forefront of the movements involved in pastoral action that led to the ousting of President Joseph Estrada in 2001.

He has also backed issues affecting farmers and workers.

With CBCP under Lagdameo's helm, the Church can "explain other avenues of action that is the post-Sin/Jaime-inspired Bantayog-Cardinal Vidal-Fr. Magi McShan Days of late...

Another church source said Lagdameo had always been known as one who was "very open and lets his views known."

"But that was before he became CBCP president," he said. "Back then he was speaking only for himself. Now, he has to be more careful because he will be speaking on behalf of the CBCP." Aaron B. Burgos Jr., Phil Magsa Bureau

TWO PRESIDENTS. Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, new CBCP president, welcomes President Arroyo during the 28th General Assembly and annual meeting of the Bishops-Businessmen Conference for Human Development at the PHILFinancial Center in Pasay City last year (BOBBY BALCITA)

Joker said to be mentoring Noli ...

From page A1

hance the group's name, even after De Castro was elected Vice President in 2004. "We splurge on good food and very intelligent conversations," a member said, saying they take turns hosting the hotel luncheons that he (Joker) mentioned their friendship.

It had been De Castro's support group ever since.

More frequent, secret

The luncheons have become more frequent, and more secret, in the last few weeks since Ms Arroyo's family was accused of taking "hot cash" from banks, and she of throwing the 2004 elections documented in tapes of her wiretapped conversations with an election official.

In one of those luncheons weeks ago, De Castro brushed off discussions of possibly becoming the country's No. 1 official while lamenting "Bahid tayo naghahanapin?" ("Why is our country like this?")

"You better prepare. You'll never know what will happen," the Hindsons duty Group told him.

De Castro reportedly said he was "purely afraid" of becoming President at the time when the political turmoil stirring from Ms Arroyo's actions is made even harder by the resurrection of new issues sought by his detractors.

Obligation

"We'll [names] for VAT (the imposition of value added tax), the increasing prices of oil and electricity, the fuel. The people, and my friends in the media, will come one everyday," was how De Castro expressed his reservations.

Arroyo reportedly sternly told him: "It is your obligation. The moment we have no President, without any amount of hesitation you have to take over and behave in a unitary public way that the country is not without a President even for a minute. Your formal oath-taking before the Supreme Court chief justice can come later."

Villar recently said he (Castro was not advising "over the presidency. "He knows it's an awesome responsibility," Villar said.

For all his reluctance, the group members agreed that De Castro was conscious of his responsibility and would not think it over he is called upon.

Several days ago, De Castro made a rare public appearance telling his cabinet not to belittle his capability and commended him for not discussing those plans for the Pay President to succeed in the event of the resignation, death or impeachment of the President.

De Castro appeared unperturbed. He told his friends Kung sa aakyat sa ika-100th birthday siempre dapo ngayon matanda na. Pero, the MP pressed, said the issue of who would succeed as Vice President once he (Castro) becomes President has not been discussed in the De Castro circle. "We have not talked about that because up to now, the Vice Presidency is fully supportive of the President."

Still supports GMA

Asked whether De Castro is likely to agree to give Ms Arroyo immunity, the source said, "I can only observe that he will not go back [on] having the doctrine, he was elected and everything had was thrown at him but he did not fire."

After the Nacionalistas Party made a party-wand last Friday here, he said he will not go back [on] having to resign or not. Villar, the MP pressed, said the issue of who would succeed as Vice President once De Castro becomes President has not been discussed in the De Castro circle. "We have not talked about that because up to now, the Vice Presidency is fully supportive of the President."

Only in Manila

Gonzales said only the people in Metro Manila were many about their call for the President to resign—a view that was not shared in the provinces. He said they were also mobilizing groups to show their support for the President.

"My own district is mobilized ... to come out in support of the President," he said, adding that he would call on all his leaders in Iloilo to show people in Metro Manila that more people want the President to stay in office.

Bishops at a loss ...

From page A1

agreement over the contents of a statement they planned to release today dealing with the country's worsening political crisis and bear fruit to resolve it.

The planned bishops' statement will be the church body's first under the stewardship of Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, who was elected new CBCP President.

As of yesterday afternoon, the proposed draft statement of Bishop Constantino of the Philippines statement had gone through at least three revisions and was still being debated, and a ranking Church official privy to the closed-door meeting at the Pope Pius XII Catholic Center in Manila.

Church insiders say the prelates were very cautious with the statement, considering that it might decide the fate of President Macapagal-Arroyo—and the country.

"They know that the impact will be great," one observer said yesterday.

Although several bishops have ruled out joining the growing clamor for Ms Arroyo's ouster, the morning remains divided over the wording of the final draft, a highly placed source told the Inquirer yesterday.

"It's been clear as early as in the first draft that the bishops will not impose on the Presidency to resign," the source said.

'Is that enough?'

But another source, also privy to the deliberations, said some prelates were not yet sold on the idea that the Church should disassociate itself from those calling for the President's resignation in the wake of allegations that she was involved in vote-rigging during the May 2004 elections.

"Is that enough?" the prelates supposedly asked while discussing a draft that calls for something less than a demand for Ms Arroyo's resignation.

The source said the phrase "will not impose on the President to resign" was included in the initial draft prepared by Archbishops Orlando Quevedo of Cotabato and Leonardo Legaspi of Caceres and Bishops Chito Tagle of Imus and Pedro Dalabisan of Tandag.

Silent Trio

Quevedo and Legaspi, both former CBCP presidents, declined to be among the "deep thinkers and national writers" of the Philippine church.

As members of the drafting committee, the four bishops had been presiding over deliberations and considering revisions on the drafts being prepared by fellow prelates, one of the Inquirer sources said.

Throughout the deliberations, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz were quiet and "simply listened," the source said.

The first draft submitted for deliberations yesterday afternoon was still "moderate" and bishops were "very calm" during discussions, he said.

Open-ended

In an emergency meeting on Thursday night, Rosales and at least three other bishops discussed the possibility of the CBCP calling on Ms Arroyo to make the "ultimate sacrifice" of resignation for the good of the country.

"We cannot really tell what position it would take until we see the final draft," the source told the Inquirer. "So far, the matter is open-ended."

The CBCP was supposed to have begun its lifetime meeting on a official position only yesterday, but the prelates advanced their calendar and began their discussions on Friday because of rapidly evolving political events.

Initially, the bishops were rumored to be preparing to release their statement earlier this morning.

Many gray areas

One of the business sources said that, to some bishops, there were still "gray areas" in the issue of condemning Ms Arroyo, unlike in the case of Joseph Estrada and Ferdinand Marcos, who were both ousted by church-backed popular revolts.

In short, it was not yet too clear if Ms Arroyo had indeed been involved in rigging last year's elections, as suggested by her supposed wiretapped conversations with a ranking election official, the Church insider said.

"They were still waiting for clearer things," he said. "There are just too many gray areas."

The other source said the initial draft statement that "pulled more open on the recommendation of a "God's statement" to find out if the President had indeed cheated.

Guest tapes

There was also mention of the statement said "Gaeta" tapes, that need to examine investigations and the option of impeachment, the source said.

"Those are in the statement already and they're not quarrelling about those matters," the source said. "The bishops were just divided on how the wording should be."

The other source said the initial draft also opened portions from Senator' personal letter read in all Masses last Sunday calling on the faithful to reject violence in resolving the crisis while reminding the President that crushing Inquirer-type required accountability.

Ms Arroyo earlier admitted that she had planned an election official and apologized for what she claimed was a "lapse in judgment."

Gonzalez on serenade: Don't play it again, Dinky

From page A2

festival congressman Jose Solis.

The song was sung by Cabinet members at the Palace gazebo here, to show their support for President Macapagal-Arroyo, after her apology on national television late last month for a "lapse in judgment." They also gave Ms Arroyo a bouquet of flowers.

The other day, 15 Cabinet members, including one of the Presidency's closest allies, Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin, "Dinky" Soliman, resigned and rallied on the President to step down.

"She was the first to jump [ship]," Gonzalez said of Soliman, who had the bright idea of reminding the President with the song by Diana Ross, after Ms Arroyo apologized on TV for talking with an election official during the canvassing of the presidential votes last year.

In an earlier interview, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said it was Soliman who made some of the song for Cabinet members to sing.

'All the things you are'

Gonzalez, who vowed to stay with the President even if he was the "last Cabinet man standing," said his song of preference for Ms Arroyo is "All the Things You Are."

Since the Jerome Kern/Oscar Hammerstein II song has never made it to MTV, the songbook crowd of grown people asked the junior secretary to sing a few bars.

Gonzalez allowed to say some lyrics: "You are the promised kiss of springtime/ That makes the lonely winner away long."

Gonzalez, however, had only minced words for Soliman and the nine other Cabinet secretaries who resigned, saying their actions were "deplorable, considering that the President trusted them."

He said they should have stood their "integrity" to the President, instead of handing in their resignations.

'Hidden agenda'

"It is obvious that they have a hidden agenda," he said, adding that they could have been "instrumental" by some people they were dealing with, including communist and Moro rebel groups, urban poor and civil society groups.

Gonzalez was referring to Eyrsa, Quintos-Deles, presidential adviser on the peace process.

"I think the least they could have done was talk to the President in private and tell her what they feel are her shortcomings—not to disclose the song 'If We Hold on Together' with a different agenda in their hearts ... and doesn't offer [for] Romero," he said.

Gonzalez said Solimar's group had been "fooled" about the need for the First Gentleman to go on exile and his Hyperactivities Mikey and Ignacio Arroyo to resign from their posts.

Middle forces

He said Glory also warned that the "middle forces [would] be unable to oppose chair of country] are already against us."

Whether or not Soliman's group was disappointed that the two Arroyo congressmen failed to resign, Gonzalez said they should have known from the time, made this comment: "Is the President the keeper of her brother-in-law? Are they not answerable for the First Gentleman's left of the law [asked] for his blood?"

The junior secretary also said he didn't think the middle forces—the so-called civil society group—were against the President.

Only in Manila

Gonzalez said only the people in Metro Manila were many about their call for the President to resign—a view that was not shared in the provinces. He said they were also mobilizing groups to show their support for the President.

"My own district is mobilized ... to come out in support of the President," he said, adding that he would call on all his leaders in Iloilo to show people in Metro Manila that more people want the President to stay in office.

Sunday BIZ

E-mail: sr_business@inquirer.com.ph
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo Rapisa

ROBERT V. Chandran set up a $100,000 start-up fund

'Put on a belt and a suspender' to avoid failure

By Michelle V. Rama

TWENTY-NINE years ago, this owner of a multibillion-dollar US oil company, could hardly find a place in the western world that welcomed inexperienced young people, not to mention foreigners, like him.

Groping as to what dreams American employers, his diploma as first could not land him a decent job.

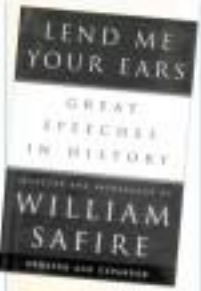
"I was ready to take on any kind of job, even pumping gas. I knew I needed to earn a living," says Indian native Robert Chandran. Adding pressure was the fact that he and his Filipina wife just had their first born child.

Chandran, founder and chief executive officer of multinational firm Chemrel Corp., did not have an inkling that in just a few years he would be building a business empire.

US-based Chemrel Corp., established by Chandran in 1981, is the largest supplier

/B2

WHAT'S INSIDE



Capturing the 'moment' to win, not to fail

/B2

Helping Filipinos' dreams (to study abroad) come true

/B4

Marrying business into art

/B4

Make money from distressed assets

/B2

Capturing the 'moment' to win, not to fail

By Dante M. Velasco
Contributor

"Lend Me Your Ears"
Updated and Expanded Edition
By William Safire
(W. W. Norton & Company, 2004)

EXECUTIVE READ

THE ATTENTION of the entire country continues to be riveted on the speech of apology of President Macapagal-Arroyo, and on the ten-hearing, almost theatrical, consequences of the mishandling of the entire affair.

Instead of assuaging the feelings of both her disappointed allies and anti-administration political critics, the speech triggered a torrent of unsubscribers and condemnations.

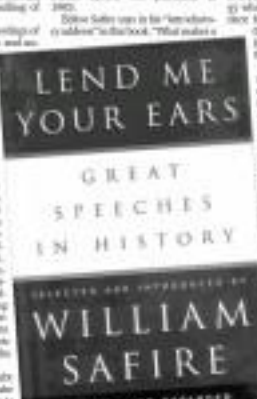
Congressional hearings and now resignations by a significant number embroiled a fresh mob even more double-voice, crying for her resignation.

Observers were scrambling why the Palace, with its vast information resources at its command, could not even muster a phone brigade programmed to provide support to the President right after her "confession." To this, the confusion was totally unconscious, but the Palace communications coordinator would be stumbled all over to string together contradictory statements, like, "the first always movements, and a sophomoric line: "I will serve you to the best of my ability."

Those of you who still doubt the power of rhetoric to make or break a political career or to ingratiate or frustrate an electorate need to be convinced that a timeless phrase (hence, into a speech invites disaster.

Some observers volunteered the insight that the Palace spokesmen participated the EDSA speech after the speech of Bill Clinton concerning his fatal sole of indiscretion with Monica Lewinsky. If true, they committed a grievous wrong hiding to note the contrasting contexts between Bill's very private act at the Oval Office and Gloria's very public act speaking to the nation as President/confessor.

And, if you read Clinton's speech (the delivered version), you would note the deft hand of seasoned rhetoricians. This brings me to speak to you about "Lend Me Your Ears," a book that I picked out at a cozy bookstore, Ink-G Store. This is not really the updated and expanded edition of "Great Speeches in History" collected by noted rhetoric expert and writer William Safire. The earlier edition was published in 1992.



Editor Safire says in his "introductory address" to the book, "What makes a great speech? Occasion. There comes a dramatic moment in the life of a person or a party or a nation that is not for the uphill and relevant of a speech. Someone is called upon to articulate the hope, pride, or grief of all... Some great occasions are followed away with predecessor addresses."

If you have a copy of the President's speech, and you get hold of the "delivered version" of Clinton's plans, you

THE TYCOON credits his success partly to the entrepreneurship skills he learned from his studies at the Philippines, particularly at the AIM.

'Put on a belt ...

Private reporter BV

of marine bunker fuels to the American Chemoil Corp. is the largest supplier of marine bunker fuels in the Americas. The company has physical operations in the largest bunkering ports in the United States (Los Angeles, Houston and New York). Chemoil's expansion outside the US started in 1998 with operations in Rotterdam and Antwerp in partnership with AEL, sound Fuel Trading. In 1999 Chemoil conveyed the Singapore market establishing Chemoil-ITC. This was followed by the opening of Chemoil Latin America in Panama in 2000 and most recently Colombia in 2003. In all these ports, Chemoil offers many services terminals, storage and barging facilities, which allows for full integration in each market.

Chemoil has grown from a trader of bunker fuels to a major player in the world-wide fuel oil markets with diversified interests in both commodity and shipping. In the year 2004, Chemoil Corp. bunkering supplied 5,000 vessels with more than 6 million metric tons of bunker fuel.

Early beginnings

Chandran was born and raised in a middle-class family in Bombay. His brilliant mind earned him a scholarship for post-graduate studies in Business Administration at the Asian University of Management, one of Asia's leading business schools located in the Philippines.

While taking up his MBA, he worked with a local chemical firm. After getting his degree from the AIM in 1974, he stayed on working for two more years.

In 1975, with $1,000 in his pocket, he went to Canada in the US.

Job-hunting was futile until he found Filipino born pair up a chemical firm in San Francisco. Chandran was tapped to help in the export-side of the new firm, which later on succeeded to take in up to $56 million worth revenues in one year. Chandran narrates.

When Chandran got his US citizenship in 1981, he set up his own business, the predecessor of Chemoil Corp.

Success factors

The tycoon credits his success partly to the entrepreneurship skills he learned from his studies in the Philippines, particularly in the AIM. He admits becoming a big fish in an ocean was almost only by accident, because putting up his own business was something he did not plan as early.

When he was young, his father, a chemist, was one of his biggest inspirations. But his father's interest was solely in chemistry and did not work much.

The young Chandran also took up Chemistry in college but the end interests he still has organized from his previous graduate studies in AIM made him realize that he could even a lot if he put up his own business. He did not have to set aside his love for chemistry because he knew he could venture on a business that was in line with his expertise.

"Students grow up in this country with a lot of brains, but not enough money," he says. Being on their short-term, Chandran says he knows the difficulties young people go through to translate their dreams the moment they step out of school.

Giving back

With AIM and Filipinos close to his heart, Chandran created a $500,000 fund to help entrepreneurs at his alma mater.

The Robert V. Chandran $500 K Startup Capital Award is available to promising graduates of the AIM's M. SyCip Graduate School of Business. Chandran will award $100,000 each year for five years beginning March 2006 to an award for the best start-up venture by graduating MBA students from the AIM. The award will be managed by Ambisyon, an Angel Investment and Venture Capital company put up by Chandran in the Philippines, together with Chemoil Corp.

The $100,000 award award is, by far, the largest sum of money ever awarded for a business plan competition. Chandran hopes that the business plans must be original, meaning it cannot be a translation of an existing business, and that they should be viable. The winner per year will be chosen by a panel of five includes professors from the AIM and Chandran himself.

"This will not be a charity kind of game. The intention of this award is really to encourage graduates to come up with bright business ideas, and be successful in putting them," he says.

Chandran believes that his pledge would be a form of gratitude to his AIM, and a source of inspiration for students who have the talent but do not have enough money to make living in the world of business.

Chandran puts success in business, believing that success alone will encourage others people to work hard in fulfilling their dreams. He says that in putting up a business, or in pursuing goals in general, one must "put on a belt and a suspender" to avoid failure—pulling in collaborators, check and rebuilding systems and processes, and be to safety measures.

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FOR SOMEONE who made the theater his second home, Nilmo S. Pignilo IV is doing a good job of managing a business, let see say. The executive director of DP Creative Entourage, Pignilo, better known as Ito to Pebbs, is the man behind the innovative Pun.Ani Workshop.

Pebbs says that he "has never worked but only assigned to himself" himself in the performing arts since college.

"In 21, I was already directing. I was spotted by a producer and was tasked to put things together. From there, I was already producing television plugs, events and was also doing stage plays and beauty pageants," Pebbs adds.

Getting armed

Conscious that he was embracing a career in dance, music and stage, Pebbs prepared himself by attending workshops by the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pen, Bulungang Gantimpala, as well as dance workshops held locally and abroad. The birth of DP Creative Entourage and eventually, Pun.Ani Workshops, was but logical for someone who has made being an effective mediator for the common good a guiding principle in life.

"The dancer, music and actors of Pun.Ani Workshop is using arts as a means, a tools to reach others. Why values? I realized, there are humanitarian. Deals I values that people need to know whatever religion or sect we are into. I believe in teaching the values of self-worth, being true to one self and respect," Ado emphasizes.

Schooled in a conformity— Ecos Bonus Mandaluyong—in ballroom and jazz, dance values in his workshops. "We were taught how it was to serve."

Assembling the cast

Pebbs assembled a competitive faculty who made their marks in their respective fields—Jhelyn Pascua (Side Theater), James Hadik (of the Manoeuvrier fame, to mark Street Dance); Allan Alejano (Music and Theater), Nestor Tabaco (Music and Theater), J.R. Antonino, Edwin Cielo Sears and Nestor Salcedo.

"We teach in basically non-dance schools, share the belief of making arts as a medium to reach values. The faculty also underwrites the Pun.ni Arts workshops so they'd be introduced to what we are offering. We don't just teach the technique, we also teach the craft," Pebbs explains.

Pebbs asserts that their fees are very affordable.

"We believe that the arts is not only for bourgeois but for all. But does this mean the quality of the workshops is disrupt? No. We don't get time for [our] money because our faculty is almost the same as the faculty of the other workshops, it just we happen that we can afford to go down to a very reasonable fee because we want everybody to avail of what they could experience arts[on]," he explains.

Pebbs grew up in a family where indulgence in art was considered a [luxury] the family could not afford. His hunger pushed him to become what he is right now. "I was deprived because I did not have the means ... We are making the arts accessible for everyone."

For everybody

"To say that arts is only for kids and learning the art of performing is for the young is an old school thought. We welcome participants from age four to 104 here," Pebbs offers.

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Sunday BIZ

Helping Filipinos' dreams (to study abroad) come true

By Alexa N. Bacay

EDUCATION has been described as a treasure a person can possess that can never be stolen. With the economic slump and the crisis that the country is experiencing now, it is surprising to know that many are still willing to spend huge sums just to study abroad.

YEPS
Young Entrepreneurs

"I think it's an, anybody's dream," said 23-year-old Christian Miranda, who believes that the Filipinos deserve the best kind of education that they can have.

A freshman at the Centre for International Education (CIE), he set up a consulting firm that would assist students to get into any university in the US and the UK.

The business came to mind when a high school friend of his came back to the country after studying Tourism Management in the University of Manchester. According to Christian, this opened a door for him to learn how international education really works.

He then sent out applications to the University of Manchester, University of Durham, University of Leeds and Cambridge University. Only Cambridge did not accept him because he failed to meet the submission deadline.

"But then I wasn't informed that I should have known," he said. There was no admission slot for him so he didn't get to UK.

CHRISTIAN Miranda believes that every Filipino deserves the best education he can possibly have.

Ambassadors

In February, he formally set up the Embassy of Foreign Universities, wherein he assembled a group of 50 consultants he calls "ambassadors," who guide his clients through the application process in foreign universities.

The ambassadors are Filipinos who graduated abroad, and who chose to come back to the country to help other students fulfill their dreams.

Christian said that his clients will have consultations with a psychologist, who would look into each child to help decide what course he/she will take. Through this talk, the Embassy would also be able to provide a prospective client's real intention of wanting abroad in the guise of pursuing further studies.

"The first encounter is a date. So we would gain the knowledge about what this person is about, and what the person is," said Christian. "I think that is what we'll need to tuning our company... on personal encounters."

He said that through the first encounter, they would also be able to find what the chances of the prospective client would be.

"We would be as honest as possible [if the client] can't afford, I mean we would tell them, 'We know, you will not get in Harvard,'" said Christian. "We will not give false expectations. That's the No. 1 rule. We don't want to make an illusion out of that."

Applications

The clients though, can apply to as many universities as they want in the United States, but only up to six in the UK. Christian's company will assist in the review for examinations like IELTS, SATs and GMAT. Then, the embassy will be responsible for submitting the application, and when the client passes, they will also assist with the passport, travel and visa application.

If the client gets through someone passes and decides to go for it, Christian's company will give a pre-departure orientation, which will give them a feel of the university they've chosen, and the one-hour meetings per month with the respective ambassador for the school they've chosen.

Christian said that they will also assist in finding a scholarship grant for the client who would need it.

Lack of funds

When asked if universities in the country can compete with those foreign schools, Christian answered, "Sadly no. It is my regret that no, we can not—because currently we don't have the funds economically to compete. Like Harvard has an endowment of $28.5 billion a year. It does not even include what they earn from the tuition fees, he how can we compete from that level palang?

"If we had that kind of money you can employ the best people in the world, we can have the best computers, we can have the best facilities."

Christian related that when his friend came back to the country she wasn't talking about the curriculum nor the course of the school she studied in. Rather, she told him about the experience, the places she went to, the people she interacted with. And then stories led Christian to think that it is important to see what it's really like abroad and bringing that experience to the Philippines.

"So, it's not colonial mentality," he said. "I think it's being open, it's being global. And I think that is the way to go. being global in the same time retaining the spirit of being a Filipino."

Christian said that in a few years' time, if his grades would permit him, he would want to go to graduate school one day. "And then I would come back."

$700 to apply

It would cost a client $700 or P37,800 to apply to the Embassy of Foreign Universities.

Compared with other consulting firms, Christian's is still inexpensive, he said. But there is no guarantee of admission. The exams to be taken are entirely on the client's ability to pass. What the client can do would do is to increase the chances of passing with the help of their rigorous review and monthly consultations with the ambassadors.

"We have a 5-year development plan... for this year we're open to US and UK. Probably we're going to open up Canada, Japan and Australia by the end of the year. Then the following year we in-

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Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel

The Great Singapore Sale offers more treats for bargain hunters

ETRO, a luxury brand at Paragon mall, offers generous discounts on men's and ladies' apparel

THE RAFFLES Hotel gift shop sells premium fabrics, cushions and trinkets, different types of tea and coffee (below), kitchenware and other household items.

One big roaring sale

Text and photos by Bella V. Bondoc

EVERY the malls in Singapore get crowded, shopping carts get filled to the brim, and cash registers ring loud as the Lion City holds the annual Great Singapore Sale.

Until July 24, participating stores in almost all of the malls in the island state are marking down their goods up to 70 percent—from the highest end (Christian Dior) to the bizarre (Chinese tea), and in between. There is something for every taste and sensibility.

"Now on its 12th year, the annual Great Singapore Sale is considered as one of Asia's biggest shopping events," says Indian Dan Pitpiya, director of tourism shopping of the Singapore Tourism Board.

The first weekend of the sale reported more than 366,000 transactions worth US$17 million, about $14 million by MasterCard holders alone. The figures are expected to increase by sale's end as more establishments offer promos and extend their store hours until 2 a.m. to give people more time to shop.

In a survey conducted by Synovate International in October 2004, Singapore emerged as the most affordable tax-free shopping destination on the Asia-Pacific. This is based on results from a comparative study on retail pricing in eight leading shopping destinations in the region.

Fab finds

You can shop until you drop at major malls along Orchard Road, the main shopping strip. Located in Paragon is Etro, a luxury brand that offers stylish ladies' bags and clothes and men's apparel. The family-owned company founded by Gimmo Etro almost three decades ago, started out as a textile firm that supplied fabrics to major fashion houses like Armani, Valentino, Issa Miura and Versace. In 1983, the store expanded to include furnishing fabrics, creating a rich clay-colored, Oriental-inspired paisley motif that has become synonymous with the brand today.

The city's luxury home-grown department store, the Tangs, is offering generous discounts of up to 70 percent on fashion apparel, cosmetics, bags, shoes and accessories. The store's in-house labels are offering discounts of 50-70 percent.

The store redefines the fashion shopping experience with the re-launch of its fashion floor at its livelier, cool and sleek. At level two, one can find comprehensive brands for ladies, from ready-to-wear and exquisite shoe collections to beauty products and trendy fashion accessories. At level three, there's the men's section with a wide selection of clothes and accessories.

Popular boutiques

The Wisma Atria, also on Orchard Road, is home to a great mix of popular boutiques and designer labels such as DKNY, Liz Claiborne, Topshop, Topman and G2. It offers 50-70 percent discount on fashion items and lifestyle products.

Takashimaya is also offering major discounts on clothes, home and fashion products.

Need shoes, jewelry and exotic-looking timepieces? The Ryan Hotel houses one of Singapore's leading luxury watch retailers, Ruger Debuis, which specializes in exceptional timepieces and jewelry designed by Carlos Dias.

There's also the Singapore Showcase, which features more than 90 lifestyle products and gift ideas from 18 brands branches in time for the shopping festival.

Singapore-inspired products include Cocktail dresses by local designers of Ashraf O, wearable works of art from Hiaz, limited-edition silver pendants from Peter's Silver and gifts inspired by the legendary Samuel Stamps from Hotel Raffles.

TAKASHI offers luxurious, bling things and stuff at half prices.

STONE-RELIEF antique table from Bohol an Ivorenian altar for one of the husband's prized paintings by Ang Kiukok.

BAS-RELIEF and wooden sculptures by Filipino artists

ANOTHER Ang Kiukok shares space with works by Filipino sculptors.

MOTHER-AND-CHILD painting by BenCab

Prized art, prized home

A tropical-style house is redecorated around a couple's collection of Filipino art

COZY living room with printed and padded seats for a more homey feel

STONE grinder dates back to Spanish times.

Text by Alice T. Vergara
Photos by Jim Goduco Pascasio

WHEN the businessman and his wife became the new owners of a two-story house in an exclusive village in Quezon City, one things were at the top of their list: redo the sprawling garden into their idea of a lush, tropical paradise and transform the Filipino-style dwelling into a repository of the husband's prized art collection.

To realize the first part of their vision, the husband commissioned landscape artist Emer Santos to renovate the garden. Santos set about replanting various areas, particularly the multi-level pond and along the trellis' fringes, with such ornamental staples as bird's-nest (pakpak-lawin), calachuchi, frangipani, San Francisco and crowned palm and orchid varieties.

In lieu of Bermuda grass, Santos opted for heartier carabao grass and various shrubs as ground cover. Rock formations on the walls and certain corners such as the pond have a jagged quality to them that evoke a solid, untrimmed look.

The businessman took the time to personally oversee the work.

"I find a lush garden like this soothing," he says. "It has a soothing effect that is absent in a stark Zen garden."

The garden is still a work in progress, but the house is now finished. Much of the four months the couple spent in renovating it went into redoing the ceiling and repainting the walls.

The newly painted off-white walls became a gallery of sorts for his collection of paintings of Malang, BenCab and the late Ang Kiukok.

SERRENO'S brass sculptures

IN THIS CORNER are paintings by Malang and BenCab. The accent table is from China.

He's also the proud custodian of abstract and impressionistic pieces by such Filipino artists as Serreno, De Jesus, Rueba, Arao and Arcilla.

"They're not only the country's top luminaries," says the husband, "they also happen to be my favorites. Their works are extremely hard to find."

At the same time, the husband hired a bamboo maker to do the family's 10-seat dining table made of narra and rattan. He also had a few padded furniture pieces reupholstered and several antique cabinets and other tables he acquired from various parts of the Philippines refurbished or chained off.

These unique pieces either complement or provide a base for his sculptures, vases and various knickknacks. Just like the garden, the couple's living room exudes the warmth, color and harmony typical of Filipino-style homes.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

MORE Ang Kiukok on the wall

TROUGH frames an outdoor sitting area.

DINING room, featuring a 10-seat narra table, opens out to the garden.

LANDSCAPE artist Emer Santos fashioned a mini tropical garden featuring bird's-nest, calachuchi, frangipani and several palm and orchid varieties.

The environment in RP's Millennium Development Goals

SOME projects and programs brought to our attention recently have to do with the United Nations-initiated Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

These goals are the reason why the projects and programs are being undertaken in the first place. We learned that the main reason for setting up MDGs was to reduce poverty, create safe drinking water and sanitation, make health care and education accessible to all, and protect valuable natural resources. Participating countries, including the Philippines, are urged to pursue these goals.

Of eight major goals contained in the MDG program, the seventh deals specifically with the environment, with the mandate: "Ensure environmental sustainability." To get to know more about this, we got hold of a copy of "The Second Philippines Progress Report on the Millennium Development Goals."

The MDG resulted from the Millennium Summit in 2000 where the UN General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration. The summit, held at the UN headquarters in New York, convened heads of state and governments "to reaffirm their faith in the Organization and its Charter" as indispensable foundations of a just and peaceful world.

Common denominator

Eight goals were identified, each with specific targets according to the needs of each country, but with one common denominator—the reduction of poverty. The progress they addressed among populations of people around the world was often health, social and economic well-being.

We turned in on the seventh goal in the Philippine report that stipulates environmental sustainability. To attain this goal, the following targets were drawn up: mainstream strategies for sustainable development by the year 2005 to reverse loss of environmental resources by 2015, bring down to half the proportion of people with no access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015, and achieve a significant improvement of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

Whoever set up these goals must have studied the problems in depth as the 2015 and 2020 are deadlines for those who only live and toil years away.

A Medium-term Philippine Development Plan also gives MDGs top priority.

Implementation

The first advocacy comes from the local level even as both Houses of Congress and other sectors of society express their support. As financing and the match for resources are essential to implementation, it is hoped that those do not preempt the goals themselves.

It is easy to see why poverty would occupy center stage in global development. The Human Development Report, while noting mainly the Philippine social ills, could well refer the problems elsewhere in the world.

One of the reasons for setbacks and poverty in the country, says the report, "is the mismanagement of its natural resources. The country's environmental sustainability has been rated poor or low. Overall, the ability of the major ecosystems to provide and maintain a regular stream of economic goods and ecological services has been constrained by declining stocks and reduced coverage and quality. That, then is urgent need to properly manage the country's natural resources and protect the environment to improve the quality of life of the present as well as future generations."

Figures and data are provided to show the perils of degradation in our forests and seas. To those who have followed these trends, the data come across as grim. But that's the way statistics are; they should surprise us. Environmentalists have been saying them all along. Even if anyone is listening, is anything being done about it?

Over-riding

Poverty continues to be the over-riding problem in the country and the state of our environment has not been able to alleviate it.

We have only to remember the discussions and bad against several government offices and agencies by a group of University of the Philippines law students demanding that these set up a political body of water, specifically Manila Bay. Instead of cleaning up, those offices appealed a lower court ruling with the Supreme Court, which is how the case stands today.

You'd think the people manning those governmental offices do not have children or grandchildren who will benefit from a clean up.

As presently, we'd like to mention that poverty will have to be alleviated in the light of increased rates of public utilities and services. VAT or no VAT, Meralco bills, for instance, have gone up even when no new meters seem to check a household's power consumption. Other services are going the same way.

How do the Millennium Development Goals fit in such situations? Where does sustainable development come in? Perhaps the National Economic and Development Authority which has a direct hand in the MDG program in the Philippines, can tell us.

E-mail the author at dennisgulanes@...

The ability of the country's major ecosystems to provide and maintain a regular stream of economic goods and services has been constrained by declining stocks and reduced coverage and quality

THE MUSEUM Shop by Banyan Tree features a rack with its unique collection of museum replicas, ethnic craft art, home accessories, museum-inspired stationery and books, apparel and other heritage-inspired merchandise.

One big roaring sale

From page B1

However, great shopping in Singapore is not only confined to Orchard Road. Just off Orchard Road in the Marina district, CityLink underground mall connects Raffles City Shopping Centre to Marina Square and Suntec City Mall, the city's largest shopping centre.

At Suntec Mall, you can find Hamleys's largest store in Asia. The Spanish brand has the widest range of goods on sale. It offers major discounts of up to 70 percent on almost all items. You can buy a blouse or lingerie top for only $$14.

The Raffles Hotel and Jo Gill Shop also deserve a visit. Here, one can find perfect gift items—from tea for-two, dishes and swabs, to different types of tea and coffee, kitchenware and other household items. It also sells accessories, stuffed toys, cookbooks and posters.

Best buys

If you're on a tight budget and really looking for best buys, Chinatown is perfect. You can practice the Filipino art of haggling here. The place is a veritable treasure trove for bargain hunters.

For more bargains, there's the Bugis Junction Center, open 24 hours. Well, it smells like Divisoria, but you can surely find the best buys here. It offers a wide range of items, from housewares to fashion accessories, fabrics, clothes and crafts. It's also known as the pedestrian heaven. Beautiful selections of embroidered pashminas in different colors can be found here. The prices vary from $$12 to a high of $$15 for the super-thick variety.

Don't miss the Museum Shop by Banyan Tree with its unique collection of museum replicas, ethnic craft art, home accessories, museum-inspired stationery and books, apparel and other heritage-inspired merchandise.

If you're just tired of shocking the store for bargains, you can feast your all-enriching cultural performances at the Malay Cultural Center. You can also visit the Arts, Exhibitions and Festival Village at Marina Promenade or view the Journey of Faith Exhibit which runs until October at the Asian Civilisations Museum. You can also indulge your palates at the upscale restaurants in the city. The possibilities are truly endless.

Excitement is really an understatement for what is in store for you in the Lion City.

Indeed, whatever your interests are, there's no better one chance you'll end your visit by planning another trip to Singapore.

The Great Singapore Sale is sponsored by the Singapore Tourism Board (Tel. 8128984) or log on to visitsingapore.com.) and co-sponsored by MasterCard, the sale's official card.

E-mail the author at bbendo@inquirer.com.ph

THE PHILIPPINE team, represented by Hermenia Abiday and his sisters, Lorie Carbo and Nora Jacinto, is awarded by Dr. Chan Tai Hon, assistant chief executive (leisure), STB.

Philippines wins Singapore shopping contest

TO BE HONEST, Singapore's shopping scene is not too exciting for many quality products and variety of choices, the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and MasterCard organized the Great Singapore Shopping (GSS) Challenge 2005 as part of the ongoing Singapore Sale.

The grand finals of the Shopping Challenge was held last June 22.

The GSS Challenge featured eight teams from Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand.

The challenge was divided into two main categories, the Singapore Challenge, which was exclusively for Singaporeans, and the International Challenge, which was for eight participating countries.

The preliminary rounds of the contest were conducted by STB and MasterCard from May 28-June 19 through their worldwide offices. The winners from each country were then invited to Singapore to take part in the finals.

The Philippines was represented by Hermenia Abiday, who won the contest using his Rustland MasterCard, and his sisters, Lorie Carbo, a school administrator, and Nora Jacinto, who just graduated from college.

Each team of three was given S$3,000 shopping money on a MasterCard prepaid credit to purchase one item from each of the following categories: fashion and beauty, jewelry and watches, consumer electronics, men's apparel, ladies apparel and shoes apparel. They were given three hours to shop in five major malls: the Centrepoint Shopping Centre, Far-EastPoint Center, Millenia Walk, Parkson and the Wisma Atria Shopping Center.

Given a fixed budget and a three-hour shopping time, participating teams competed for the best buys and bargains. The challenge was all about savings, value for money and getting big discounts.

The grand prize was bagged by the Philippine team. They were given S$6,000 shopping vouchers. They also took home all the items they purchased.

The Philippine team gained a total of $2,750 savings from its purchases, which included men's apparel (Burberry shirts) at 70-percent discount; ladies' apparel (BCBG Max Azria tailored jacket) at 90-percent discount; shoes (from Charles David) at 90-percent discount; and a digital camera for only $439 from an original price of $869.

Taiwan was second, and Australia third. The other teams were Thailand, India, Malaysia, Indonesia 1, Indonesia 2 and China.

Shopping participants experienced the excitement of shopping using MasterCard.

Bella R. Bendo

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Goodbye, blues. Hello, parties!

TESSA!

Jessie Pobeda-Nadales

WHEN it rains, indeed it pours! While the past months saw my social calendar resembling that of a hermit, these past weeks have been filled with numerous events. Political typhoon or not, business must still go on, products must still be launched and charitable projects must still be funded.

And as private invitations for these affairs reflect: When people make such an effort, it behooves us to show our support. Or at the very least, to make an effort to stay on the list of the Philippine Tatler's Most Invited issue!

Well, valentine I am simply bursting or not...I am just glad to have finally come out of my house arrest, to hope and bounds and shed the last traces of postpartum blues out of my bloodstream.

Nothing beats a revitalizing Chi Spa experience in Cebu. I went straight to the Lasentique cocktails at the Manila Polo Club where the main focus of the evening was hair. French hair expert Jean-Francois Lasentique was in town to visit his local franchise in the Power Plant Mall in Rockwell and Shangri La Plaza Mall (where his shop is right across Urban Spa, as I know of his products).

Since they were giving free hair analysis, I decided to have one for my perennial, bi-colored and highlighted (translation: heavily tortured) hair. To my horror, I was diagnosed with the worst combination: dry scalp and oily hair. While my reverse delivery, I am sure I must have a high case of falling hair. Thank goodness for my fine to virgin!

I am just glad to have finally come out of my house arrest and shed the last traces of postpartum funk out of my bloodstream

Something that is harsh on the body and stressful on the mind will have the same effect on hair. Hair looks reflect the general state of your health, explained the very amiable Jean-Francois. Period. Hair inspires during our tête-à-tête, I could only offer him the one French line I know. Voulez vous coucher avec moi ce soir? As a director of Alliance

CONTINUED ON

SHARE Palace guests Pia Rizzo-Lacoma, Francis Jardeleza and First Daughter Luli Arroyo

ALL RELATED. Marites Tantoco with Dennis and Cristina Tantoco

SHARE GM Jurado Lynch with Robert Lazcal and her designer son Raja

LOVELY ladies Maren Tantoco, Chay Mendiola and Maria Ka Concepcion

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City Garden Hotel
Makati

ESSENCES PR girls Toni Gregory and Jessie Burger

TAGAYTAY Highlands host Wilfi Ocier and engineer's Cory Quirino

JUST Shop's owner Epperson with photographer husband Tom

FOUNTAIN GENERATION Free Flager and Shang chair Tom Zhu

PRETTY Bea Tarrosa and mom Nena

DESTINATIONED Couple Albertino and Emily Lopez

Goodbye, blues. Hello, parties!

ESSENCES shoppers Frances Lim, Julie and Werner Henning and SSI boss Anton Hoang

LIVE guest Anton Garcia and wife Dyan Castillejo and David and Jessica Bonnevie

ARTKO friends Teddy and Janine Dario, Marbie Limcaoco and Bingbing Degamo

Transcribed CT

Transplant (in Manille, I really must brush up on my fractured French.

Busiest day

My busiest social day last week was a hat trick: three events in a row! The first was the one-of-a-kind, one-man exhibit of abstract expressionist painter Jose Acuña at Ramon Esteves. The exhibition sale of artworks was an emphatic no! of rich boss or pinchpennies: vibrant red, gold and black. Each purchase of a painting came with a gift from Esteves and a contribution to Esteves foundation.

I just love the "Gift With Purchase" idea, but including something for a worthy cause in every Esteves boat's exhibit-selling work is reflective of his personality: He was a bundle of energy moving around the shop, encouraging people to buy.

The ongoing exhibit has moved to the fifth floor of Esteves's, so do check it out until July 15. In between shopping for beauty essentials and men's colognes, indulge yourselves with modern art. Esteves has become a one-stop, savvy bivouac of its expensive line of wares for men, in our every (sauna) by "Look Who's Talking's" Johnny Litton and I, guests were "consumed" based on their personality. Essences has all the top foreign colognes and also carries the popular Filipino colognes of Jesus Sarmiento.

Resto reopening

After cheering Ivan's loudest painting on behalf of an intuitive design client, I headed to the Shang Palace at the Shangri-La for the hotel's impressive reopening.

I was cheated by a Hajo Leard pseudo-Chinese outfit with semi-Egyptian overtones, which scarcely matched the cute roses by the Shang Palace's model, photographed on a gigantic fishbowl. But this was no fashion faux pas. My first GM Jardaih lunch had borrowed my outfit months ago and immortalized it in their invitations, menus, etc.

The new Shang Palace is a cinch to move, with a menu to be renewed. The chic, modern interior is refreshingly different from the traditional Chinese red-scheme. Interesting details like Rajo's myriad staff uniforms and the hair-do of the maitre'ds have transformed the restaurant into a new-generation postmodern dimension.

FIRST executive Vicky Bhatt, Italian Ambassador Umberto Colonna and wife Clara, Hedy Tanenco and Patrick Jacinto

An exquisite, 10-course Cantonese dinner of wood-hearted dishes like baked lobster, braised abalone, stir-fried scallops and pan-fried beef rolls was served, while dragon dancers with noisy drums brought luck all around the restaurant. Forget your Sarah Heads Live when you go to the new Shang Palace, the dishes are too tempting to pass.

Unfortunately, I had to rush out to another engagement at ABS-CBN for the taping of "Home Boy," the new TV show of Ian talking host Boy Abunda. I was a guest for an episode about "looking young." I would have declined, but Boy is a good friend, so off I went, hoping I would look young in my Shang Palace custom-complete with my purple wig. After the episode, I knew I was finally cured from motherhood blues.

Splendid event

Another splendid event was the Flager dinner at the Shang ballroom in honor of Ivan Flagers. The impressive dinner set-up of long tables was characterized by its wide white drapery lining the ballroom. The delicious meal was followed by a fashion show of the new collection of Flager watches, some adorned with colorful feathers and jewelry set in head-village designs. Each creation seemed to be screaming "Wanna!" As the oncoming models paraded before us, my husband, Dennis, was the one screaming, "Gotcha!" before I could ask him for an advance birthday gift.

There are just so many exciting things happening in the city. Our political scenario has become as dramatic as a sensational telenovela, like "Llorna" and "Rampa-rating Rufa." Since politics seems unable to rise beyond the grave of fake factory and dubious villains, we should all just try and go about our lives and do our share in making the world a better place.

For our part, by supporting the local theatrical theater industry. Try to catch "Mapaglimlahing Habon ng Gapasang," a religious musical directed by Lupino's Master Tony with music composed by Ryan Cayabyab. The very limited performance ends today with two shows at the CCP Little Theater. I caught the Monday night, which was quite entertaining with Ogie Alcasid and Gloria Lasalle in the lead roles.

"CAT'SAY" producer Ramon Ortiz

LAZARTIGUE manager Andrea Rocio-Montenegro with actor Hans Montenegro

FUCHSIA-feathered Flager model MARIE MADRIGAL (MISS) Applet-Aberin, with Dennis Valdes

L'ORÉAL's Lucia Capocaccia Hurry Puppo

We may live in troubled times but if there is a lesson I learned from "Llorona," it is this: "Happiness and peace, for us on Earth".

E-mail me at [illegible]

ART lovers Tessa Adimlogan, Frances Yu and Trina Mendoza

HAIR expert Jean-François Lacaze

CHINESE outfits by Raja Luce for the maitre'ds of Shang Palace